

Hafa Adai!

Bulgarian folk dance ensemble to perform on Saipan, Guam. **PAGE 2**

Man arrested for allegedly assaulting his aunt over a locked door. **PAGE 3**

\$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 77

www.saipantribune.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023

www.facebook.com/saipantribune

CPA asks DOT for \$30M for fiscal years 2024 and 2025

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has asked the U.S. Department of Transportation for supplemental funding amounting to \$30 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 in order to keep the CNMI's airports open until fiscal year 2026.



King-Hinds



Tenorio



Buttigieg

CPA sent Monday a letter addressed to U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to ask for supplemental funding, given that CPA expects to exhaust all of its federal funds before the end of 2023. Buttigieg himself said in a response

See CPA on Page 4

4th IPI auction nets over \$225K

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The fourth auction in a series of six that's mandated pursuant to the receivership granted in favor of USA Fanter Corp. against Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC netted over \$225,000.

See IPI on Page 4



FAMILY FUN DAY

Several children are seen enjoying the activities provided at the booth of the Public School System's Early Head Start Program during the Autism Awareness Family Fun Day last Saturday at Micro Beach in Garapan.

CRYSTAL MARINO

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Days until
'touchback rule'
takes effect on
Sept. 30, 2023:
164

Igitol appointment to MVA board withdrawn



Palacios

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Without explaining his reason, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios has withdrawn his appointment of former Retirement Fund board member Rosa L. Igitol to the Marianas Visitors Authority board of directors.

» **Iguel is appointed to CNMI Cannabis Commission**

On the other hand, Palacios recently nominated Juan Aschingtip Taisakan Iguel to the CNMI Cannabis Commission, representing Saipan and Northern Islands.

See MVA on Page 4

Lawmakers confused; there is still some ARPA funds left

» **Conference committee done with proposals in the budget revision bill; to reconvene today**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

There is, after all, still some American Rescue Plan Act funds left over from the previous administration.

See ARPA on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Bravo Kitchen & Bar is hoping its new menu will bring in more customers to the restaurant.

PAGE 11



ASIA

The United States, South Korea and Japan conduct a joint missile defense exercise on Monday.

PAGE 13



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Wildflower meadows have been growing in popularity among gardeners, and for good reason.

PAGE 14



SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com



ISLAND'S BEST

WHY WE'RE THE BEST

TRUST

ALL USED CARS UNDERGO A THOROUGH AND DETAILED 64-POINT VEHICLE HEALTH CHECK INSPECTION

VALUE

FREE 3-YEAR MAINTENANCE PLAN ON ALL TOYOTA OR LEXUS MODELS

LOWEST RATES

COMPETITIVE RATES FROM OUR PARTNER BANKS AND BENEFITS FOR GAP, PAINT PROTECTION AND MORE.



SP23P0016 WAS \$28,999
2019 TOYOTA TACOMA \$27,999*



SP23R0028
2020 TOYOTA COROLLA \$19,999*



SP23T0038
2019 MAZDA CX-5 SPORT \$17,999*



SP22T0247
2019 TOYOTA CAMRY \$22,999*



SP22T0222
2018 TOYOTA RAV4 AWD \$21,599*

*Terms and conditions apply. See dealer for details.
Signature Care available only on Toyota, Lexus, Chevrolet or BMW used car purchases.

Visit us or shop online
AKSaipan.com



Atkins Kroll (Saipan), Inc.
#1 Chalan Msr Guerrero San Jose
Saipan, MP 96950

(670) 234-5911
Showroom Hours:
Monday to Saturday 8am to 5 pm

HERE FOR SAIPAN. HERE FOR LIFE.

Local

World-renowned Bulgarian folk dance ensemble to perform on Saipan, Guam

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A world-renowned Bulgarian folk dance ensemble will arrive on Saipan tomorrow, Thursday, to hold a series of performances to celebrate the Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc.'s 20th anniversary.

Gordon I. Marciano, president of the Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc., said that Sofia-6 will participate in the first Mariana Islands International Dance & Arts Festival, which will take place on April 27 to 30 in Guam.

Sofia-6 was supposed to participate in the 2023 Flame Tree Arts Festival on Saipan, but the festival has been postponed.

Gordon informed Gov. Arnold I. Palacios in a letter last April 4 that the Bulgarian performing group—which is composed of 20 people—will pay a courtesy visit to him and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, as well as to the Legislature, this

Friday, April 21, at 2pm.

The CCVI requested Palacios to host a 100-pack-age welcome dinner for the visiting artists, guests, CCVI members, and local performers/entertainers at a venue of the governor's choice from 6pm to 10pm. The CCVI also requested the governor to prepare a gift for the group.

Since 1976, Sofia-6 has received many awards, including its sixth world award at Estampas del Mundo in Mexico City in 2016. The group also grabbed first prizes at the International Folklore Festival in Albania in 2021, Belgrade Award FIDAF International Folk Music and Dance Festival in Serbia in 2020, and a Grand Prix at the International Folklore Festival in Romania in 2020.

The Mariana Islands International Dance & Art Festival will be held in Guam on April 27 to 30, where the public will enjoy an array of dance, music performances, art exhibits, and food vendors.

In response to Saipan Tribune's inquiry, CCVI secretary Frances Sablan said yesterday that the original plan was to have a local group composed of Chamorro and Carolinian dancers participate in the

MIIDAF by attending both the Guam and NMI festivals, but lack of funds has scrapped that plan.

Instead, Sofia-6 members will make a courtesy visit to the office of Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas Camacho on Thursday at 2pm, then perform at the Man'Amko Center in China Town on Friday at 10am. At 2pm Friday, the group will call on Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, then at the Legislature.

Sofia-6 will perform during the Fiesta Friday at the NMI Museum grounds in Garapan on Friday at 7pm.

On Saturday at 9am, the group will perform at the Red Cross event in Susupe and have a canoe ride with 500 Sails in Susupe.

On Monday at 6pm, Sofia-6 will perform at the Mt. Carmel School auditorium.

On Tuesday at 11am, they will perform at the Marianas High School stage or cafeteria.

On Tuesday at 6pm, CCVI and KKMP radio, the Saipan Mayor's Office, and Marianas Visitors Authority will host a farewell dinner for the group.

On Wednesday, April 26, at 7:50am, Sofia-6 will depart Saipan for Guam.

Thank you for everything you do.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS' WEEK



Present your business card or business ID to receive 20% discount off The Terrace Lunch buffet Monday April 24 - Friday April 28.

Great prizes to be won!

Daily Business Card raffle:

Every day April 24-28 at 12:30 PM we're giving away 1 Resort pass (lunch buffet with pool access) for 2 adults

Admin Week Lucky draw:

Lucky draw on Monday May 1 at 12:30 PM at The Terrace.

First Prize: 1 Night stay in an Ocean View room including breakfast for 2

Second Prize: Resort Pass for 2 adults and 2 children (ages 4-11)

Third Prize: Saturday lunch buffet for 2 adults and 2 children (ages 4-11)



THE TERRACE RESTAURANT
Daily Buffet Available for Lunch and Dinner
Local residents enjoy 15% off

CROWNE PLAZA RESORT SAIPAN
Reservations call 670 234 6414 | Website: saipan.crowneplaza.com



D&Q Saipan Co., Ltd is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following position:

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

ACCOUNTANT: Bachelor's degree in Accounting (may be foreign equivalent). 60 months experience as an Accountant. Develop, maintain, and analyze budgets, preparing periodic reports that compare budgeted costs to actual costs. Knowledge in GAAP; SAP; SAGE programs. Travel is required to Guam 2-3 times per year for meetings with D & Q Guam. Send resume to: D&Q SAIPAN CO., LTD, Attn: Max Kretzers, P.O. Box 504462, Saipan, MP 96950. Or email: hr_dq@tanholdings.com

Job Vacancy Announcement

Operations Manager (Saipan, MP)

Oversee and supervise overall daily operations of the company; Set a strategic plan for productivity and sales targets and ensure the company meets such targets; Develop and implement strategic operational and sales plan that expands the company's customer base; Develop and implement strategic operational and sales plan that expands company's customer base; Anticipate and track operational and tactical risks inherent in the business and provide strategic solutions; Assess and analyze budgets and on-going business projects to find ways to minimize expenses and optimize profits.

Requires High School Diploma and 24 months of experience as General Manager, Operations Manager, or General Affairs Manager.

Send Resume & Transcript to Wing Corporation.
ATTN: Hyeyoung KIM, P.O.BOX 10003 PMB 586, Saipan, MP 96950.

Man arrested for allegedly assaulting his aunt over a locked door

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man was arrested over a week ago for allegedly assaulting his aunt after he accused her of lock the door to their house and he couldn't get in right away.

Patrick Urumelog, 54, was arrested over a week ago after he allegedly slapped his aunt twice in the face. He faces charges of assault and battery (domestic violence), assault, and disturbing the peace.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho has since imposed a \$3,000 cash bail on Urumelog and ordered him to return to court on April 24 for his arraignment. Urumelog was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody where he will await further court proceedings.

According to court documents, Department of Public Safety officers were dispatched to a residence in Garapan at around 9:59pm last April 7, in response to a

report of a disturbance.

At the residence, police met with the victim and another man who lived in the house. The man told police that Urumelog slapped the victim twice in the face. He then led the officers to Urumelog who was inside the home.

When the police tried to arrest him, Urumelog allegedly resisted, so three officers had to pin him to the ground to carry out the arrest.

In an interview with the victim the next day, April 8,

police learned that Urumelog allegedly came home drunk and knocked on the house door, which was locked. When the victim answered the door, Urumelog allegedly yelled at her to ask her why she had locked it.

The victim clarified that it was not she who had locked the door, but, as she took a seat on a couch, Urumelog approached her and allegedly used his right hand to slap her twice across the face.

The victim added that af-

ter slapping her, Urumelog threatened to take her phone and "smash" it on her face.

Urumelog's aunt also told her interviewer that, as Urumelog was getting arrested, he threatened to kill her once he gets out.

Free health screening this Sunday

Saipan Lion's Club will be providing free health screenings during their 2023 Health Fair this Sunday morning, April 23, 2023, at the Marianas High School cafeteria in Susupe.

Set to last from 7am until 12pm, the health fair is completely free to the public and will consist of blood pressure and sugar testing, distribution of reading glasses, immunizations, and information and consultations. It will also feature a diabetes awareness campaign, Lions Clubs International membership drive, a Non-Communicable Disease Program, and consultation with second vice district governor Lion Roy Adonay.

As participating organizations, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Public Health Services will be handling all immunizations. Some of the services that will be available are HIV, STD, TB, VH, and WIC. The CPR demonstrations will be done by members of the Western Pacific Training Solutions, LLC.

The Northern Marianas College's Nursing Club, and the Marianas High School are also participants of the event.

The event will also have some fun raffles and giveaways, as well as free haircuts. The Lion's Club invites all

members of the public to come and check out these services, and avail of the freebies.

The Lion's Club in Saipan is a part of the Lions Club International, and is specified as Region 2, District 204. (Chrystal Marino)



YOUTH CONGRESS COLOR GUARD

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Battalion Color Guard took part in the 19th CNMI Youth Congress Inauguration Ceremony last April 15 at the legislative building on Capital Hill. The cadets presented the colors for the U.S. and CNMI anthems. The team was commanded by cadet LTC Julius Torres, shown carrying the U.S. flag. He was joined by his left guard, cadet SSG Eman Barce; his right guard, cadet 2LT Jolash Saluta, and the CNMI flag, carried by cadet Capt. Malentino Amandus. The color guard team was accompanied by their Army instructor, SFC (ret.) Deynarose Sunderland.

\$1K scholarship up for grabs

A memorial scholarship that honors the memory and legacy of Retta Sue Hamilton and former representative Jacinta M. Kaipat will be awarded to two essayists in honor of these two women's work to protect the Marianas.

The Retta Sue Hamilton & Jacinta M. Kaipat Memorial Scholarship will award a one-time \$1,000 scholarship for two graduating high school seniors entering college. This scholarship is non-renewable.

The scholars should be pursuing degree(s) in Environmental or Public Health, Public Policy and Governance, Diplomacy, Political Science or other degrees that are in line with Our Commonwealth 670's goal to "protect our ancestral lands, seas and skies from irreparable damage caused by military practices and other developments that pose a threat to our health, physical environment and livelihoods" Student applicants should submit an essay of 250

words or less on what college they have been accepted into and how their studies will prepare them for future work and/or activism toward this goal.

For those who would like to participate in this essay contest, send your essay application to ourcommonwecdh670@gmail.com. Deadline to apply is April 30, 2023.

The selection of the 2023 Retta Sue Hamilton & Jacinta M. Kaipat scholarship shall be made by the OCV 670 Board.

The awardees are to fully understand that in accepting this scholarship they:

- Must have the intention to complete their college degree.
- The selected recipients must provide official proof of registration into an accredited college for the upcoming semester.
- All applicants must average and maintain a 3.0 weighted average or higher throughout the scholarship period. (PR)

ARMATECH

Xeeder RFID
Hotel Door Locks
Installer and
Repairer

Tel: (670) 234-8895 | Email: armatech.saipan@gmail.com
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 50 1055 • SAIPAN • MP • 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500 / 1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPTS.COM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF TYPHOON RESISTANT
ACCORDION ALUMINUM SHUTTERS AT THE ARFF BUILDING
BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
ROTA, COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-008-23**

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed proposals, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (the "RFP") and other contract provisions, for awarding a contract to supply and install typhoon resistant accordion aluminum shutters at the ARFF Building, Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport, Rota, CNMI. The Scope of Work and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning **March 20, 2023**, upon payment of \$100.00 in cash, cashier's check, credit card or certified check to the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport.

Proposals will be received at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor-Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport no later than **2:00 P.M. CHST, April 19, 2023**. Proposals received after the date/time indicated above will not be opened and will be returned to the Proposer.

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a bid bond, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount no less than **ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount**. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

EDWARD B. MENDIOLA
Deputy Executive Director

Date: _____

PUBLIC NOTICE

ADDENDUM NO. 1

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Eighteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Friday, April 21, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. via zoom. Please see the link below.

AGENDA¹

- I. Preliminary**
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
- II. Public Comments²**
- III. Unfinished Business**
- IV. New Business**
 1. Early Intervention Part C Grant Application
 2. Special Education Part B Grant Application
 3. FY 2021 Audit
 4. FY 2024 Budget Request
 5. Revisit American Rescue Plan (ARP)
 6. FY 2023 Consolidated Grant (CG) Spending Allocations
 7. Stronger Connections Grant (New)
 8. Head Start/Early Head Start FY 2023:
 - a. Refunding Grant Narrative and Budget (Continuation Year 5)
 - b. Cost Of Living Adjustment Grant Narrative and Budget (COLA)
 - c. Quality Improvement Grant Narrative and Budget (QI)
 - d. One-Time Program Improvement Funds Grant Narrative and Budget
 9. U.S. Dept of OIA
 10. Solar Panels
 11. School Level Projects
 12. Schools with damaged/no fence
 13. School Flagpole Status
 14. HMS Temporary Classroom Status
 15. Certification & Licensure Matter
 - a. CLO Report No. 2023-18-02
- V. Executive Session³**
 1. Legal Updates
 2. Personnel
 3. Other matters
- VI. Miscellaneous Matters**
- VII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board Meeting**
- VIII. Adjournment**

¹ Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/96858903055?pwd=OXhtUUN1a2Y4OXhTRD-crYB0eG4zZz09>

Meeting ID: 968 5890 3055
Passcode: 691512

² Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.

³ Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

ARPA

From Page 1

That revelation confused some lawmakers yesterday, who said they were under the impression that there is simply no more ARPA funds left, hence the dire need to revise the fiscal year 2023 budget law.

Sen. Corina L. Magfona (D-Saipan) said yesterday that she's a little confused to hear that there is still some ARPA money left.

"And I would assume that if there [were] no ARPA, that the general fund is being tapped to subsidize those payments of those expenses," said Magfona after hearing the testimony of Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita during the bipartisan conference committee meeting yesterday.

The conference committees of both the Senate and House of Representatives held a joint meeting yesterday to resolve their differences on a bill to revise the budget law for the CNMI government's operations for fiscal year 2023.

Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), who chairs the Senate Conference Committee, told *Saipan Tribune* last night that they're done with all proposals but haven't voted on the final product.

"We will convene tomorrow at 10am to go over one last time, all the amendments that were voted on," Manglona said.

At the joint meeting held in the House chamber, Norita was called to testify about ARPA matter and other issues.

Magfona said that Norita clearly stated that there is still some ARPA funds left.

"But to my understanding from the very beginning when we started the fiscal team, I was under the impression that we just didn't have any ARPA, hence the need to implement cost-containment measures and release the ARPA-funded employees," she said.

"So you're confidently sitting there and saying that that none of the general fund was used to supplement or subsidize any ARPA expenditures?" the senator asked.

Norita replied "yes" as she explained that general fund collec-



Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), who chairs the Senate conference committee, sixth from left, offers the Senate's proposals to the House of Representatives conference committee during their joint meeting yesterday in the House chamber. The conference committee is trying to resolve their differences on a bill that would revise the budget law for the CNMI government's operations for fiscal year 2023.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

tions were used for general fund obligations, including prior year obligations that must be paid such as utilities, fuel, and other critical expenditures like Group Health and Life Insurance payments.

Before Magfona questioned Norita, Rep. John Paul P. Sablan (Ind-Saipan) stated that when they were having weekly meetings with the administration's Fiscal Response Team, it was the notion at the very beginning that there's no more ARPA.

Norita said that, based on the findings of the Fiscal Response Team, the ARPA cash that is remaining does not match the expenditures that are in the Munis system. "And so the work continues to reconcile those funds, and it will take longer than a couple of weeks to really find out what happened to those funds, where did it go," Norita said.

She said that looking at the reports that they put together with the ARPA spending plan versus what was actually expended in the system versus the cash balance, there's a significant

difference in unidentified expenditures on recorded expenditures.

"So when we take all those factors into consideration, we have to figure out a way to move forward. And the best way to move forward is to restrict the ARPA spending so that we can conduct the reconciliation," Norita said.

She said this is why they moved into immediate cost-containment and the release of ARPA employees. "Because if you look at the system and look at the budget available, there should be a lot of money remaining. However that's not the situation," Norita said.

She said they also have to look at the remaining cash and the outstanding obligations that continued to mount without a revised budget, and it was exceeding \$70 million.

The secretary said they are holding on to the payment of obligations because they want to reconcile. "And so the best way to move forward is to revise the budget. So that we can adjust the expenditures. Until then, we have to use what little remaining

cash we have to keep the government in full operation because there are no operational funds in the general fund budget," Norita said.

Norita said in their fiscal response meetings, they were using a Dec. 31, 2022, cutoff to help them project forward as to how long their cash flow will last. She said at the current

level levels with the bloated amount of FTEs and ARPA-paid employees, that cash would fully depleted in a matter of 10-pay period.

"So to avoid that situation, we had to take immediate action to start cutting out expenses, hence our decision to start restricting ARPA expenditures," Norita said.

MVA

From Page 1

Palacios informed Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) on Monday that he is withdrawing Igitol's appointment at this time, but did not indicate his reason. He apologized for any convenience this may have caused DeLeon Guerrero and other senators.

Palacios nominated Igitol to the MVA board, representing Saipan, last Feb. 23.

DeLeon Guerrero has already notified Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) of the governor's decision. Babauta chairs the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations.

As for Iguel's nomination, Palacios said that, if confirmed, Iguel will serve the remaining term vacated by Valentino N. Taisacan Jr. which will expire on Sept. 11, 2025. Iguel's appointment requires the advice and consent of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

CPA

From Page 1

email that he and his team will consider CPA's thoughts and supports the agency's mission.

The CPA letter, signed by board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds and executive director Christopher Tenorio, said the agency will exhaust by the end of this fiscal year—on Sept. 30, 2023—all the federal funds it has received.

"Unfortunately, unlike most jurisdictions in the continental United States, our tourism industry has not recovered and is nowhere close to reaching pre-pandemic levels despite the remarkable investments that the CNMI government has made to invigorate the tourism industry," stated CPA's letter.

Specifically, CPA is asking DOT to give it \$15 million in ARPA funds in fiscal year 2024 and another \$15

million in fiscal year 2025, for a total of \$30 million that would be used to keep CPA afloat until fiscal year 2026.

"The additional federal assistance that CPA seeks will support in maintaining its operations, lowering the costs of air carrier operations at the airport, and attracting new air carrier operations at the airport(s)..." the letter stated. "[We] fear that without additional federal assistance for our airports, local government operations will be severely hampered, and the issues we face now will only compound, making this already vulnerable community further exploitable by bad actors that have neither United States' nor the CNMI's best interests in mind."

In an email response to CPA, Buttigieg said he is honored to be entrusted with leading the U.S. Department of Transportation at this consequential moment. "Your voice is impor-

tant, and my team will consider your thoughts as we work to meet the department's mission and support the administration's priorities: to help create millions of good-paying jobs; move people and goods safely; revitalize communities that have been left behind; tackle the climate crisis, and enable our country to compete and win in the global economy. I hope will you continue to share your views and to follow our work," he said.

CPA previously stated that, faced with a significantly decreased revenue and its ARPA funds nearly depleted, the most viable option in order for it to survive would be to impose higher rates, which could lead to a loss in the number of the CNMI's airline partners.

CPA fears that, if no subsidy can be provided for CPA to continue operations, it may have to soon increase its airport rates just to get by, possibly risking the loss of airline partners.

IPI

From Page 1

Michael White, who represents Clear Management Ltd.—the court-appointed receiver in this case—informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Monday that the fourth auction of IPI's gaming equipment netted \$225,812. The fourth auction concluded last March 31.

"...Clear Management conducted a fourth auction covering a portion of the equipment. Thirty-one lots were on offer, and acceptable bids were received for 22 lots. No bids were received on the remaining nine lots, and these items will be re-auctioned at the next auction. Bids were received from 11 parties, seven of which were successful. The total value of the successful bids received was \$225,812. Each of the successful bidders has paid 15% of the total successful bids into The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC Escrow Trust Account. Clear Management believes that the successful bids indicated in the table

are reasonable, and should be accepted by the court," White stated.

In addition, White has reported that Clear Management incurred \$11,554.26 in expenses from March 1 to March 30, as a result of the auction. White has also asked that the court disburse funds for these expenses.

"Clear Management hereby respectfully moves that this court enter an order approving the report and account of the fourth auction filed herewith, and authorizing and directing Clear Management to collect the remaining 85% of the successful bids and to execute appropriate bills of sale and to deliver the items sold to the successful bidders. Clear Management further respectfully moves that the court authorize and direct disbursement of funds held in the Escrow Trust Account, to Clear Management for expenses incurred from March 1 through March 31, in the amount of \$11,554.26," said White.

White also informed the court that the fifth auction of IPI's gaming property is set to close on June 9.

‘Consolidate village, agricultural homestead programs for 3 islands’

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development & Programs & Gaming finds it necessary to combine the village homestead provisions for Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. The committee, chaired by Sen. Corina L. Magofna (Ind-Saipan), also deems it necessary to include agricultural homestead provisions for Saipan that’s similar to Rota and Tinian.

The committee issued a report last week that recommends support for the passage of Senate Bill 23-17, which will consolidate the village and agricultural homestead programs for Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. The legislation’s intent is to amend certain statutory provisions of the village and agricultural homestead to uniformly apply to Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

The proposed legislation also seeks to clarify the permitting process once an eligible applicant has been approved and issued a homestead lot by the Department of Public Lands.

The committee agrees that it is not necessary to amend the provisions pertaining to the Northern Islands village and agricultural program.

The Commonwealth Code mandates the village homestead program for all three senatorial districts, yet it also provides for the Rota Village Homestead Reservation Act and for the Tinian Agricultural and Village Homesteads.

Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian) introduced the leg-

islation last Feb. 2 and it was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on REDPG for disposition.

Cruz filed a similar legislation during the previous 21st and 22nd Legislature. The Senate passed the bill, but the House Committee on Natural Resources did not act on it.

DPL is mandated to designate certain portions of public lands for a homestead program in the CNMI, pursuant to the NMI Constitution. An individual seeking to avail of the homestead program may be issued one agricultural and one village homestead lot if the applicant does not have interest in land at the time of applying.

Upon approval and issuance of the homestead permit, current regulations require eligible applicants, or homesteaders, to comply with a three-year permit period, during which a homesteader shall enter, use and improve the lot within 120 days; build a single family residence within two years; start to reside in the issued homestead no later than the end of the second year; and continually reside throughout the third year.

According to the committee’s report, major concerns have been raised regarding the revocation of lots during the three-year period due to the homesteader’s acquisition of land through marriage; recipient of a deed of land by a parent or an estate; or purchase of affordable real property after the issuance of a homestead permit, despite the homesteaders’ compliance as required under the

NMI Administrative Code.

The committee said it is evident that DPL determines whether the applicant has an

existing interest in land at the time of approval rather than basing it on interest in land that may occur in the future.

The committee finds that revoking a permit during the three-year period because the applicant acquired an interest in land during the three-year period is contrary to DPL’s regulation, is unfair, and is unjustified.

The committee said it finds it necessary to prohibit DPL from revoking permits after it is approved, regardless of whether the applicant acquires an interest in land after the time the permit is approved.

Turn over your unused meds this Saturday

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
Correspondent

s part of the National Take Back Initiative, the U.S Justice Department’s Drug Enforcement Administration will once again be collecting unused and expired medication for dispos-

al. In the CNMI, Take Back Day will be this Saturday, April 22, 2023.

Turn in locations will be open throughout the CNMI, with Saipan’s location at the main lobby of the Commonwealth Healthcare Center. Those living on Rota can turn

in their unused and/or expired medicines to the Rota Heath Center in Songsong, while for those on Tinian, the turn-in locations will be at the Tinian Health Center in San Jose. All locations will be receiving medicines on Saturday, from 10am until 2pm.

Individuals are encouraged to turn in their unused or expired medication for a safe and anonymous disposal, and all medicines will be accepted except new or used needles and syringes, which will not be accepted.

For more information visit www.dea.gov or call (808) 541-1930.

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Brenda B. Repeki

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Brenda B. Repeki is proposing to utilize a Cargo Container to construct a structure measuring 24’ (L) x 12’ (W) x 11’6” (H) for its “Mobile Home” Use. This use is permitted in the area as a conditional use. The site is located on Lot No. 011 G 279 in the village of Kagman III. This area is zoned as Village Residential.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: May 10, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, May 9, 2023. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Cecilia Taitano Fitial, Acting Chair

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Da Dankery

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Da Dankery is proposing to utilize Two (2) existing structures for its “Cannabis Farm” Use. Structure A measures 49’7” (W) x 26’2” (L) and Structure B measures 16’10” (L) x 24’10” (W). This use is permitted in the area as a conditional use. The site is located on Lot No. 044 K 07 in the village of Dandan. This area is zoned as Rural.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: May 10, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, May 9, 2023. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Cecilia Taitano Fitial, Acting Chair

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Eddie’s Fish Mart and Snack Bar

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Eddie’s Fish Mart and Snack Bar is proposing to utilize an existing structure measuring 72’ (L) x 43’6 (W) and to also construct an extension to the West Side of the property measuring 25’2 (L) x 12’ (W) for its “Restaurant, General” Use. This use is permitted in the area as a conditional use. The site is located on Lot NO. 002 F 19 in the village of San Jose. This area is zoned as Village Residential.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: May 10, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, May 9, 2023. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Cecilia Taitano Fitial, Acting Chair

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Ma. Jyn & George Binghit

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Ma. Jyn & George Binghit are proposing to utilize an existing structure measuring 30’5” (L) x 16’4” (W) x 11’10” (H) for its “General Wholesaling” Use. This use is permitted in the area as a conditional use. The site is located on Lot No. 002 H 10 in the village of Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: May 10, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, May 9, 2023. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Cecilia Taitano Fitial, Acting Chair

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Mariana Water Tour, Inc.

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Mariana Water Tour, Inc is proposing to utilize an existing structure measuring 104’ (L) x 45’ (W) for its “Gas Station, Light Repair” Use. This use is permitted in the area as a conditional use. The site is located on Lot No. 015 D 92 & 015 D 84 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

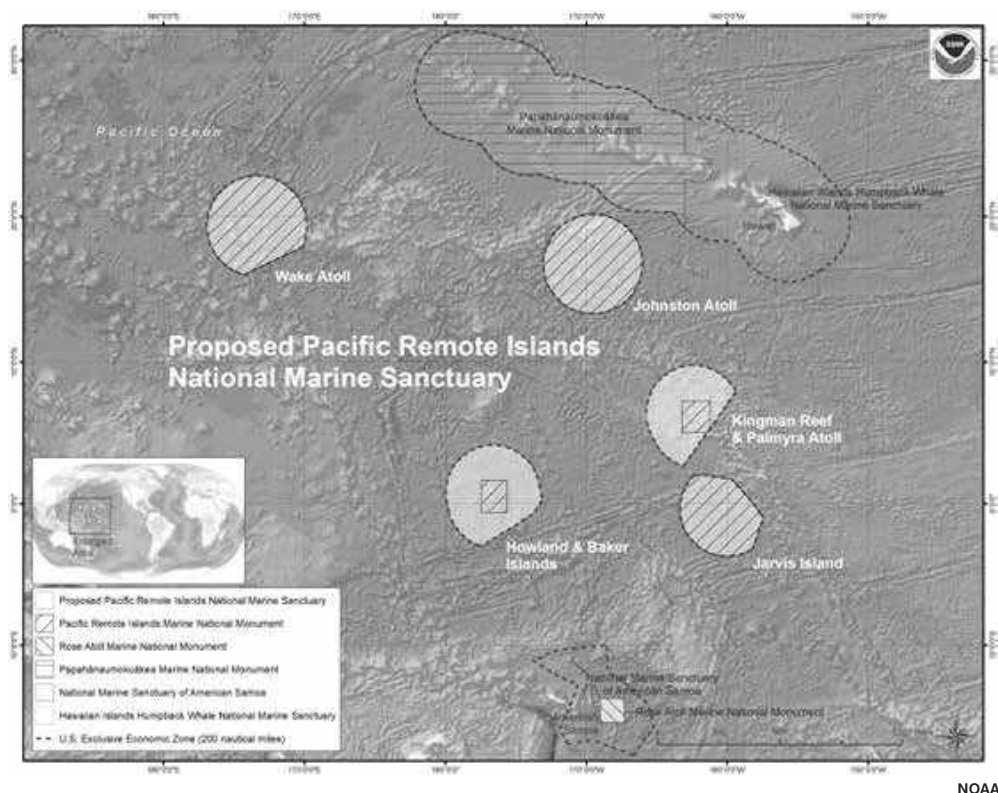
Date: May 10, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, May 9, 2023. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Cecilia Taitano Fitial, Acting Chair

NOAA considers sanctuary in waters around Pacific Remote Islands



Area proposed for Pacific Remote Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced yesterday it is starting the process to potentially designate a new national marine sanctuary in the Pacific Remote Islands area, as directed by President Joe Biden and affirmed by the Department of Commerce on March 24, 2023.

The proposed area in the central Pacific Ocean includes marine areas within the existing Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, as well as currently unprotected submerged lands and waters, to the full extent of the U.S. exclusive economic zone—an area totaling about 770,000 square miles. Terrestrial areas are not included in the proposed sanctuary.

“The Biden-Harris Administration and Department of Commerce are committed to bold conservation goals through the America the Beautiful initiative,” said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “Sanctuary designation would bring to bear NOAA’s capacity and expertise in research and management of coastal and marine resources, maritime heritage and archaeology, and public education and outreach in order to protect the unique ecological and cultural resources of the Pacific Remote Islands.”

The atolls, shoals, sea-mounts, banks and reefs surrounding the Pacific Remote Islands are home to some of the most diverse and remarkable tropical marine ecosystems on the planet, and provide a haven for a host of wildlife, including corals, sharks, fish, marine mammals, seabirds

and invertebrates.

“The Pacific Remote Islands ecosystems face persistent threats from hazards, such as marine debris, invasive species and climate change,” said NOAA administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. “Designating this incredibly important area as a national marine sanctuary would complement and strengthen existing efforts to preserve the region’s natural, cultural and historic values.”

Designating the proposed area as a sanctuary would add the conservation benefits of a national marine sanctuary to the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument’s existing protections, and provide a stable management framework, a citizen advisory council and lasting protections that extend beyond the monument’s current boundaries.

“The proposed sanctuary would also be an opportunity to recognize and celebrate Indigenous cultural connections to the lands and waters of the area,” said Nicole LeBoeuf, director of NOAA’s National Ocean Service. “This region has a rich history, beginning with Pacific Island peoples whose proficiency with navigation and ocean wayfinding created a cultural network across the vastness of the Pacific.”

About the public comment period

The public is invited to comment on the proposed sanctuary designation through June 2, 2023, through the Federal eRulemaking Portal, www.regulations.gov, by searching for docket number NOAA-NOS-2023-0052.

» Agency invites public comment on proposed sanctuary through June 2, 2023

Comments may also be mailed if postmarked by June 2, 2023.

NOAA will host in-person public meetings, with an option to join virtually.

The input NOAA receives from the public will assist the agency with the preparation and release of draft designation documents, and in formulating alternatives for the draft environmental

impact statement.

A detailed description of the proposed sanctuary, based on the nomination offsite link submitted by the Pacific Remote Islands Coalition, as well as additional information about opportunities to provide comment, can be found at <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/pacific-remote-islands>.

Public meetings

NOAA will host in-person public meetings, with an op-

tion to join virtually, if possible, on the following dates. During the meetings, NOAA will gather public input on boundaries, compatible uses, threats a new sanctuary would address, how best to promote marine science and education initiatives, and other topics as described in the Notice of Intent. Meeting times, locations, and virtual meeting links will be added at least 15 days before each meeting.

■ May 10, 2023: Honolulu,

lu, Hawaii

■ May 11, 2023: Hilo, Hawaii

■ May 17, 2023: Hagatna, Guam

■ May 18, 2023: Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

■ May 19, 2023: Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

■ May 20, 2023: Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

■ May 24, 2023: Pago Pago, American Samoa (**PR**)

Name: JEMIMAH EDITH CRUZ ATALIG
Address: 741 HARVEST FIELD WAY,
FOUNTAIN, CO 80817
Phone: 314-600-0432
Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re the Matter : FCD-GU CIVIL
of the Petition : ACTION NO.
for the : 23-0121
Appointment of :
General : NOTICE OF
Guardianship : HEARING
for :
J.A.C.C. :
Minor Child :
By :
J.E.C.C. :
Petitioner :

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on May 19, 2023 at 9:00 p.m. in Courtroom 205A, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 28th day of March, 2023.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ Pearleen B. Matagolai
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Administratrix Velma C. Deleon Guerrero

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : CIVIL ACTION
OF THE ESTATE OF : NO. 22-0256-CV
LUIS LG CAMACHO, :
Decedent. : NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the petition of Velma C. Deleon Guerrero for the issuance of decree of final distribution will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at Room 220A, Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Susupe Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated this 13th day of April, 2023.

/s/
Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net
Attorney for Administratrix Violeta Ablog

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : Civil Action
OF THE ESTATE : No.: 21-0237
OF :
NESTOR : NOTICE OF
RAFANAN : HEARING
ABLOG :
Decedent. :

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the petition of Violeta Ablog for the decree of final distribution will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at Room, Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Susupe Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated this 11th day of April, 2023.

/s/
Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Petitioner Antonio B. Cabrera

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : CIVIL ACTION
OF THE ESTATE OF : NO. 23-0042-CV
JOSE CRUZ :
CONCEPCION, : NOTICE OF HEARING
Decedent. : NOTICE TO
CREDITORS

TO: ALL HEIRS, DEVISEES, LEGATEES AND CREDITORS OF: JOSE CRUZ CONCEPCION

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the petition of Antonio B. Cabrera for the issuance of letters of administration will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at Room 220A, Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Susupe Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

For further particulars, please refer to the Petition on file herein, or contact counsel for Petitioner, Joey P. San Nicolas, P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602, Saipan, MP 96950; telephone (670) 234-7659 and email jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net.

Pursuant to Rule 11, NMI R. Prob. P., notice is hereby given to all creditors of the decedent, JOSE CRUZ CONCEPCION, or of his estate, that they must file their claims with the Clerk of the Superior Court, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, within sixty (60) days of the first publication of this Notice, or the claims will be forever barred.

Dated this 21st day of March, 2023.

/s/
Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Estates

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : Civil Action No. 00-0180D
OF THE ESTATE OF : Civil Action No. 00-0179D
(Consolidated Probate Cases)

SELVINO ATALIG :
TAISACAN, :
Decedent. : NOTICE OF HEARING

IN THE MATTER :
OF THE ESTATE OF :
PATROCINA E. :
TAISACAN, :
Decedent. :

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Administrator Richard E. Taisacan's Petition for Final Distribution will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the Superior Court for the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the petition should not be granted.

For further particulars, please refer to the Petition on file herein, or contact counsel for Petitioner, Joey P. San Nicolas, P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602, Saipan, MP 96950; telephone (670) 234-7659 and email jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net.

Dated this 6th day of April, 2023.

/s/
Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Administratrix Tina Marie Leon Guerrero-Camacho

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : Civil Action
OF THE ESTATE OF : No. 21-0286-CV_

VERTILIA ELENA :
CAMACHO LEON :
GUERRERO, : NOTICE OF HEARING
Decedent. :

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Administratrix Tina Leon Guerrero-Camacho's Petition for Decree of Final Distribution will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at Room 220A, Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Susupe Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated this 13th day of April, 2023.

Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659
Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net
Attorney for Petitioner Jude Untalan Hofschneider

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER : Civil Action No.:
OF THE ESTATE : 22-0241-CV
OF :
HERMAN : NOTICE OF
LAWRENCE : HEARING
UNTALAN :
HOFSCHEIDER :
Decedent. :

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Petition for Decree of Final Distribution by Administrator Jude Untalan Hofschneider will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 27th day of April, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated this 5th of April, 2023.

/s/
Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 77Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com**Mark Rabago** ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Red-flag laws offer hope against mass shootings

Monday's mass shooting at the Old National Bank in downtown Louisville is the latest reminder of America's worsening epidemic of gun violence. It should be more than enough to spur elected officials to pass common-sense measures to keep guns away from unstable individuals.

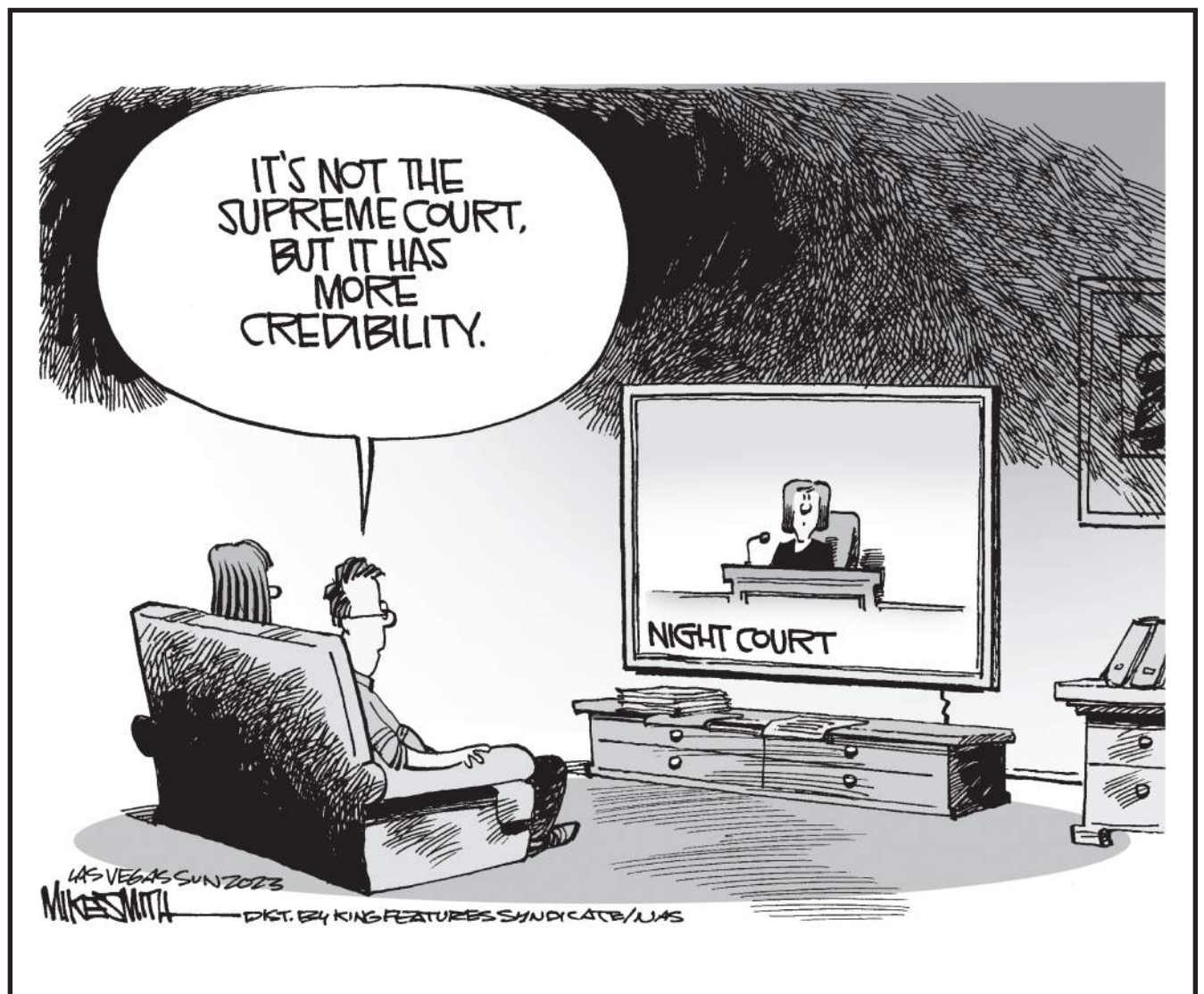
The Louisville shooting left five people dead and at least eight wounded, including two police officers. Despite his mental-health issues, the shooter was able to legally purchase an AR-15-style rifle the week before. The massacre came just two weeks after three nine-year-old students and three staffers at a school in Nashville were killed by a disturbed individual who had managed to stockpile seven guns despite having been diagnosed with an emotional disorder.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, who lost a close friend in the Louisville shooting, gave an emotional speech this week on the need to prevent future tragedies. As a Democrat who supports tougher gun laws, but faces a veto-proof Republican legislature, his frustration is understandable. Other officials have less excuse for inaction.

The fact is, research shows that a majority of mass shooters exhibit warning signs before committing murder. Laws that aim to prevent these people from accessing firearms are a critical tool in reducing the likelihood of mass shootings. Known as red-flag laws, such measures allow police or family members to ask a court to temporarily confiscate weapons belonging to unstable individuals. They're one of the few gun-safety policies that command a degree of bipartisan support—and they seem likely to work: A study of Connecticut's red-flag policy credited the law preventing at least one death for every 10 to 20 times it was used. A California study of 21 cases found that after guns were taken from individuals who'd made explicit shooting threats, no further violence occurred.

Last year, Congress passed the most significant federal legislation on guns in nearly three decades, which included federal grants to encourage states to institute red-flag policies of their own. Unfortunately, this push has only hardened opposition among lawmakers in Republican-controlled states. As of 2020, 19 states and the District of Columbia had red-flag laws on the books, with Florida and Indiana the only ones to pass them under Republican leadership. In the years since, despite scores of mass shootings, those numbers haven't changed. Neither Tennessee nor Kentucky has adopted a red-flag law; in fact, Tennessee is one of multiple red states to pass recent legislation making gun access even easier. Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, a Republican, said Tuesday that he will push state lawmakers to pass a red-flag law in the wake of the Nashville massacre—a belated but welcome step forward.

Red-flag laws aren't failsafe. In the past year, gunmen have carried out mass shootings in California, Colorado and New York, all of which have enacted such laws. In Colorado, several local sheriffs announced their resistance to enforcing red-flag laws, questioning their constitutionality; in New York, authorities believed that statements made by an eventual mass shooter who underwent a two-day mental-health evaluation weren't specific

See **RED-FLAG** on Page 9

Fast fashion: cheap clothing at a great cost

In February 2019, Kim Kardashian took to Twitter to express her disapproval for an online fashion company that is known to sell knockoff designer clothing. She complained that she had worn a one-of-a-kind dress, and in less than 24 hours a website had stolen her look and sold it online. The internet felt the shock waves of a fashionista dismayed. While her issue with this process is rooted in designer disrespect, it raises alarming questions: Exactly how do these fashion companies do it so fast, and why is their product so affordable?

If you're like me, it's possible some of your best outfits have come from mall stores like H&M, Forever 21, Zara, UNIQLO and so on. If you're even a little like me, it's likely you prefer to spend less money shopping for trendy clothes. You can find many fully online stores selling articles of clothing for as little as a few cents. What is going on, and why do my orders take months to arrive on my doorstep? Allow me to introduce you to one of the world's biggest problems today: fast fashion.

Consumers of these companies may notice that the quality of product is rather poor, inviting a one-wear approach. Fast fashion companies thrive off of cheap textile production on a mass scale, mostly outsourced from China and India. These inexpensive materials include mostly synthetic polyester (the least expensive textile to produce), cotton, elastane, viscose and nylon. Pushing trendy products utilizing a quick output model comes at a great ethical cost. Not only is the quality and re-wearability of clothing sacrificed, but so is public health.

Textile production is one of the most polluting industries in the world, responsible for emitting nearly 1.2 billion tons of CO₂ (carbon dioxide, a killer greenhouse gas) per year, contributing to global warming, climate change and profound natural disasters. Humans have suffered extreme weather events as a direct result of our gaseous transgressions, such as wildfires, large tropical storms, severe drought and record-high heat.

If that doesn't quite paint the picture, know that every second, one garbage-truck full of clothing materials is dumped into landfills or burned. Burning synthetic material is toxic for our environment and reduces breathable air quality, causing a multitude of health issues in affected populations. You may have heard that the trash contents of landfills frequently make their way into our oceans, causing harm to our marine life. Fast fashion materials take exponentially longer to break down, plaguing our natural environment with

By **ALEXANDRA ZUNIGA**

The Baltimore Sun

Alexandra Zuniga is a student in the Communication Department at San Francisco State University.

toxins and adding to human-made disasters like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

Many of us have been hearing these warnings from environmentalists for years. While we may be desensitized to what occurs on our turf, take into consideration the hands that touch your clothes before they are shipped across the world. Garment workers often face the poorest working conditions, working for mere cents per hour to produce our beloved Kardashian duplicates. Textiles are constructed by the hands of underpaid women and children who suffer in diseased factory conditions and poor living situations. This method of production relies on consumers like you and I who return for another one-time-wear outfit. Again, and again and again.

While all of this information may seem overwhelming, there is something valuable gained by becoming aware of this crisis. You have just become aware of your power. These companies rely on you and I, and without us, they collapse. It is entirely possible to break the cycle of clothing waste with your participation. In the long run, you will save money investing in an ethically produced, higher quality garment that you can add to a rotatable closet and feel good knowing your product has never seen a sweatshop.

Another great shopping alternative is hitting the thrift store. I have scouted some of my favorite high-fashion clothes at secondhand shops. I personally feel a higher rush of dopamine when I find a marked down Patagonia in great condition than paying full price in stores or online. I invite you to shop for your next outfit at your local thrift store; you may be surprised by what you find. If you're not ready to shop secondhand but are starting to second-guess where you spend your money, a Google search can help you find out what companies push ethical product.

Kim Kardashian is definitely onto something putting the spotlight on trendy, 24-hour turnaround sites. Let us be the generation that purges itself of this wasteful structure that has a grip on the working class—everywhere. You are more powerful than you think.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

College campus hecklers, your disruptions don't count as free speech

America is experiencing two disturbing simultaneous trends: the rise of mob censorship to shut down speaking events on college campuses, and an attempt to justify it as merely the exercise of “more speech.”

At SUNY Albany this month, protesters stormed an event, formed an improvised conga line and prevented a lecture—ironically, titled “Free Speech on Campus”—from beginning.

In a now notorious incident at Stanford Law School last month, protesters shouted down a federal appellate judge's speech.

And in November, hecklers drowned out conservative commentator Ann Coulter at Cornell, playing loud music, chanting, shouting at her and repeatedly preventing her from speaking. “We don't want you here, your words are violence,” screamed one heckler.

I have defended free speech on college campuses for over a decade. We've seen waves of shout-downs before. But few defended the disruptions. In fact, they were usually met with near-universal condemnation.

Not so anymore. Some now argue that drowning out and shutting down speakers is an exercise of “more speech,” not an attempt to carry out a “heckler's veto” on the speaker. Depressingly, 62% of college students say that shouting down a speaker is acceptable to some degree.

“It's called protest,” one Stanford student remarked to Judge Kyle Duncan while the judge objected to being shouted down. “It's under the 1st Amendment. I thought you knew about the 1st Amendment.” Later, after the Stanford administration condemned the incident, a group of protesters papered Stanford Law Dean Jenny Martinez's classroom

with fliers reading, “We have free speech rights too,” and, “‘Counter-speech’ is free speech.”

Apparently, America's future lawyers and future judges fundamentally misunderstand free speech rights. Shouting down speakers is just like any other form of censorship: It's the few deciding for the many what they can hear. Protesters have every right to engage in peaceful, nondisruptive protest. But they do not have the right to take over someone else's event and make it their own.

This is a basic point, and we understand it in almost every other context. Nobody argues that you have a free speech right to stand up during a Broadway musical and sing along with the actors or to scream at a public library book reading.

Just because the public is invited to attend an event—and sometimes to speak during a Q&A period—does not make it the public's event to disrupt or transform as it pleases. Your distaste for a speaker doesn't grant you a right to prevent a willing audience from listening to that speaker.

There must be places in a free and pluralistic society where groups can freely associate and share ideas without first seeking approval from a crowd of hecklers. Colleges are such spaces. It's the very reason they exist.

One increasingly common semantic game is to argue that “heckler's veto” is a legal term and that it applies only when the government steps in to shut down speech in anticipation of a disruptive response. But as a practical matter, the government—or on college campuses, those in the administration—can end up supporting a heckler's veto through its action or inaction. Besides, “heckler's veto” has long had a nonlegal, colloquial definition that tracks the plain meaning of the words: hecklers vetoing speech.

In either case, both the hecklers and those in authority

By **NICO PERRINO**

Los Angeles Times

Nico Perrino is executive vice president of the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression and host of So to Speak: The Free Speech Podcast.



who enable them will regret normalizing this sort of response to speech.

In December 1860, Frederick Douglass and a group of abolitionists assembled at a public meeting hall in Boston to discuss how to abolish slavery. No sooner had the meeting begun than it was overtaken by a pro-slavery mob. The police did nothing to prevent the heckling and disruption, and the meeting was eventually shut down. A few days later, Douglass gave an impassioned defense of free speech: “To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker.”

The “heckling-is-free-speech” crowd may argue that the pro-slavery mob's action was wrong because of its message, whereas those engaged in today's disruptions are morally right. But we can't hinge the validity of a heckler's veto on whether the hecklers feel justified in their actions. They always do. That's why justifications for censorship shouldn't be allowed to outweigh principles of free speech.

While students may succeed today in shouting down speakers they oppose, they should realize that those same tactics could be used tomorrow against speakers they support.

Republicans won't win back the youth vote with a culture war

Last week, the Missouri House of Representatives passed a budget that eliminated aid to local libraries amid a dispute over the constitutionality of a state ban on “explicit material” in public schools. Last month, legislators in Tennessee approved a law restricting drag performances on public property or anywhere minors might be present. Over the past few years, Florida governor Ron DeSantis has presided over a series of policies attempting to eradicate critical race theory and other ideas associated with the political left from school curriculums.

The controversies over these and similar measures don't merely demonstrate how acrimonious today's culture wars have become. They also reveal how much politics has become an intergenerational battle, with older traditionalists against younger progressives.

The idea of a yawning generation gap tends to evoke associations with the bygone 1960s. But Americans are actually much more politically divided by age today than they were when Bob Dylan was warning the nation's parents that “your sons and your daughters are beyond your command.” In the 1968 presidential election, voters under the age of 30 preferred Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey to Republican opponent Richard Nixon by 9 percentage points, according to Gallup, while voters aged 50 or more opted for Nixon by 6 points.

Half a century later, according to survey data from the Pew Research Center, Joe Biden prevailed over Donald Trump by 24 points among voters under 30 and by 12 points among voters aged 30 to 49, even as Trump carried the over-50 vote by 5 points.

Young adults are not always liberal. Most voters under 35 supported Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush in the 1980s, and age differences in partisan preferences were fairly minor as late as the 2000 election.

But over the past two decades, the generations have increasingly separated themselves politically. Barack Obama was much more popular, and Donald Trump much less popular, among younger voters than among their elders. Issues of race, gender and sexuality that divide voters along generational lines have become more central to the nation's

political debates. And changing demographic trends have ensured that millennials and members of Generation Z are much less likely than the middle-aged or elderly to identify as White, attend church regularly, or live in a rural area.

Conservatives are well aware that many younger Americans disagree with them politically. Negative characterizations of young adults as naïve radicals who don't understand the real world, or coddled “snowflakes” who demand special treatment, are common on conservative media platforms and circulate widely on Facebook, the older internet user's social network of choice. (This intergenerational mockery can occasionally go both ways; some young liberals use “boomer” as an epithet and complain about the political “gerontocracy.”)

Many conservative leaders see younger generations' relative liberalism as the result of the pernicious influence of left-aligned public institutions and industries. DeSantis and other Republican officials frequently defend their efforts to regulate social media platforms and gain control over state educational systems as necessary to dismantle liberal propaganda machines. Former Wisconsin governor Scott Walker blamed last week's defeat of a conservative candidate in a state Supreme Court race—an election in which turnout among college students was unusually high—on “years of radical indoctrination on campus, in school, with social media, and throughout culture.”

Framing today's politics as intergenerational warfare

RED-FLAG

From Page 8

enough to trigger the law, thus enabling him to acquire an assault rifle as soon as he turned 18.

Yet these failures don't invalidate the broader concept; they show that more work is needed to ensure that red-flag laws are effective. States need to tighten such statutes to remove ambiguities and clarify when authorities should act. President Joe Biden's administration has already tasked federal agencies to partner “with law enforcement, health care providers, educators and other community leaders” to expand public awareness of red-flag laws; it should expand this campaign to persuade states to strengthen en-

By **DAVID A. HOPKINS**

Bloomberg Opinion

David A. Hopkins is an associate professor of political science at Boston College and the author of Red Fighting Blue: How Geography and Electoral Rules Polarize American Politics.



may provide Republicans with some short-term advantages. Appealing to older citizens can help win elections, as they are always the most reliable voters. The aging of the large baby boomer cohort also ensures that the median age of the national electorate will continue to increase.

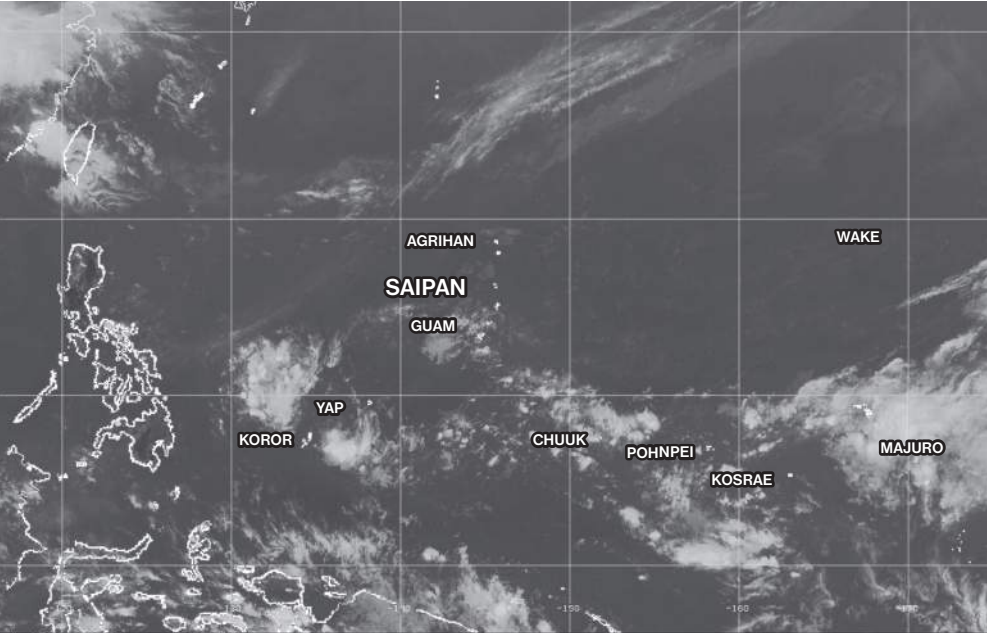
But there are also risks to this approach. If Republicans could reduce the current Democratic advantage among rising generations before it further solidifies into a lifelong partisan attachment, it would pay electoral dividends for decades to come. It's hard to imagine that Republican leaders will achieve much success by treating young adults' political views with contempt or characterizing them as gullible victims of liberal brainwashing. Reversing the leftward drift of the young will probably require much more than removing some books—or drag queens—from the nation's schools and libraries.

forcement of the law while addressing concerns over gun owners' due-process rights. As a necessary step to get more red states on board, Biden should regularly publicize the fact red-flag laws have withstood numerous legal challenges—including in Republican-leaning Florida, where judges have approved red-flag requests more than 8,000 times since 2018.

Gun-rights extremists will surely continue to oppose such laws. But sensible people of both parties should recognize that they're the most promising approach yet devised to address the national scourge of mass shootings. It's hard to imagine a worthier cause to support.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:55 AM, TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows scattered showers within the Marianas Waters, mainly south and west of the islands now. The buoys reveal combined seas of 6 to 8 feet, composed mainly of a trade-wind swell from the east-northeast and wind waves from the east.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	82° / 76°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	87° / 77°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:00 AM	6:31 PM
Thursday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM
Friday	5:59 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	5:58 AM	6:32 PM
Sunday	5:58 AM	6:32 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:11 AM	5:42 PM	-
Thursday	5:51 AM	6:38 PM	-
Friday	6:32 AM	7:34 PM	-
Saturday	7:16 AM	8:31 PM	-
Sunday	8:02 AM	9:28 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Showers	71° / 64°	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	83° / 65°	
Hong Kong	Scattered Thunderstorms	81° / 76°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 74°	
London	Partly Cloudy	71° / 57°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	64° / 49°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	97° / 78°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	57° / 44°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	87° / 79°	
New York	Cloudy	56° / 44°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	91° / 77°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	82° / 63°	
Busan	Showers	66° / 61°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	97° / 79°	
Salem	Isolated Thunderstorms	91° / 72°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	56° / 46°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	81° / 58°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	78° / 58°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	69° / 44°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
12:50 AM	High Tide	0.39	
6:56 AM	Low Tide	2.05	
1:30 PM	High Tide	0.30	
7:32 PM	Low Tide	1.96	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 16, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	1, 4, 5, 7	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW9308	3:45AM	7:30AM	4, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	TW9307	9:00PM	2:45AM+1	3, 6
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (*The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.*)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily	3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun	3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily	3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Business

Bravo Kitchen & Bar unveils new menu



MARK RABAGO
Bravo Kitchen & Bar's honey barbecue pork ribs.



Bravo Kitchen & Bar's ribeye steak.



Bravo Kitchen & Bar's sizzling sisig.

MARK RABAGO

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Bravo Kitchen & Bar is hoping its new menu will bring in more customers to the Garapan restaurant.

Owner Adrian Ruan said the new menu is an offshoot of their lenten offerings and since it was well received by their dine-in customers, they decided to retain some of the items and add some others.

Bravo Kitchen & Bar's new menu is highlighted by the mixed seafood platter that consists of grilled calamari, mus-

sels, sea bass, and prawns.

Those who want more variety can order the mix deep fry platter, which is calamari, lumpia, chicken wings, and french fries with sauce and dressing.

A light and homey snack is the nacho overload that is made up of tortilla chips topped with grilled chicken, mozzarella cheese and served with refried beans, guacamole, salsa, and sour cream.

Bravo Kitchen & Bar also has new Korean dishes like Korean grilled squid, which is a tangy Gochujang-marinated Korean squid served with Bravo Korean sauce; and Korean Fried

Chicken Dakgangjeon, which is crispy fried chicken glazed with Korean-style sweet chili sauce.

Filipino cuisine is well represented in the new menu as well with fried lumpia, sisig, and piping hot bulalo available.

The former is savory ground pork filling on a spring roll wrapper, while sisig is made out of pig ears, onions, chili, and peppers topped with an egg and served in a sizzling hot plate.

Bulalo is a Filipino beef shank with bone marrow soup with Chinese cabbage and sweet corn best consumed on a rainy day.

Ruan said the multinational menu so far has been a hit

civilian infrastructure," the ministers said.

"We remain committed to intensifying sanctions against Russia, coordinating and fully enforcing them," the communiqué said, and would support Ukraine "for as long as it takes."

"Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and its threat to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus are unacceptable," the ministers said.

uptick in consumer confidence as well as the still-incomplete release of pent-up demand suggest to us that the consumer-led recovery still has room to run," said Louise Loo, an economist at Oxford Economics in a note.

But while consumption and retail sales have grown, other economic indicators with weaker growth such as industrial output and fixed-asset investments indicate an uneven recovery. Slowing price indices also point toward inadequate demand.

included strong words meant to curb what the ministers see as increasing Chinese and North Korean aggressiveness in Northeast Asia.

But it was Russia's invasion against Ukraine that highlighted the three-day summit in this hot spring resort town.

"There can be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocities such as Russia's attacks against civilians and critical

The higher-than-expected rise in GDP comes amid a rebound in consumption, as people flocked to shopping malls and restaurants after harsh COVID-19 restrictions were removed. Analysts initially pegged economic growth to be about 4%.

In March, total retail sales of consumer goods went up by 10.6% year on year, and grew 7.1 percentage points compared to the first two months of the year.

"The combination of a steady

G7 vows to intensify sanctions on Russia over war in Ukraine

KARUIZAWA, Japan (AP)—Top diplomats from the Group of Seven wealthy democracies vowed a unified front against Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, saying at the close of their meetings Tuesday that they were committed to boosting and enforcing tough sanctions against Moscow.

The G-7 communique laying out their commitments also

China's GDP grew by 4.5% in quarter, boosted by consumption

BEIJING (AP)—China's gross domestic product grew 4.5% in the first quarter of the year, boosted by increased consumption and retail sales after authorities abruptly abandoned the stringent "zero-COVID" strategy.

The growth in the world's No. 2 economy from January to March compared to the same period in 2022 was the fastest in the past year, and outpaced the 2.9% growth in the previous quarter, according to government data released Tuesday.



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.net>
Tels: (670) 234-9447 / 234-6866 / 234-7670 • Fax: (670) 234-9021

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) would like to inform the general public that The Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) program will no longer be accepting pre-applications for the program **after May 01, 2023**, to ensure that the funding availability is distributed accordingly.

The pre-application is available online on NMHC's website, www.nmhc.gov.net (Public Notice/Announcements->Homeowner Assistance Fund Plan) until May 01, 2023. Pre-Applications will only be accepted at the NMHC main and field offices. Should you have any questions, please contact HAF Specialists, Ms. Rovana Litulumar or Ms. Kinai Pua during regular business hours at (670)234-6866. Those who are interested in reviewing the HAF Plan and details of the program's terms may also visit NMHC's website.

/s/

Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Nation

Supreme Court hears mail carrier's religious tolerance case

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court is being asked to decide under what circumstances businesses must accommodate the needs of religious employees.

A case before the justices Tuesday involves a Christian mail carrier in rural Pennsylvania. He was told that as part of his job he'd need to start delivering Amazon.com packages on Sundays. He declined, saying his Sundays are for church and family. U.S. Postal Service officials initially tried to get substitutes for the man's shifts, but they couldn't always. When he didn't show, that meant more work for others. Ultimately, the man quit and sued for religious discrimination.

The case is the latest religious confrontation the high court has been asked to referee. In recent years, the court's 6-3 conservative majority has been particularly sensitive to the concerns of religious plaintiffs. That includes a ruling last year in which the court said a public high school football coach should be allowed to pray on the field after games. Another case the court

Speaker McCarthy vows to pass nat'l debt bill—but can he do it?

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker Kevin McCarthy pledged Monday to pass legislation to raise the nation's debt ceiling—but only on condition of capping future federal spending increases at 1%—as he lashed out at President Joe Biden for refusing to engage in budget-cutting negotiations to prevent a debt crisis.

In a high-profile speech at the New York Stock Exchange, McCarthy, the Republican leader who was marking his 100th day as speaker, said the nation's debt load is a "ticking time bomb" and Biden is "missing in action" as the deadline nears to raise the debt limit. But McCarthy's own ability to bring his plan to passage as promised is highly uncertain.

Late Monday, House Republicans rallied around the speaker as he returned to Capitol Hill, with preparations underway for a vote on the package as soon as next week—a rapid turnaround. McCarthy is expected to brief House Republicans privately early Tuesday morning on the details. Even though the Republican plan's chances in the Democratic-controlled Senate are dismal, House approval could serve as a calling card



AP
Gerald Groff, a former postal worker whose case will be argued before the Supreme Court, stands during a television interview near a "Now Hiring" sign posted at the roadside at the United States Postal Service, Wednesday, March 8, 2023, in Quarryville, Pa.

is weighing this term involves a Christian graphic artist who wants to create wedding websites, but doesn't want to serve gay couples.

A federal law, Title VII of

pressuring Biden to negotiate.

"Since the president continues to hide, House Republicans will take action," McCarthy vowed.

The White House hit back quickly, accusing McCarthy of "dangerous economic hostage taking." And administration officials reupped Biden's pressure on the Republican leader to approve a debt ceiling increase with no strings attached.

McCarthy's Wall Street address came with Washington heading toward a potential fiscal crisis over the need to raise the nation's debt limit, now at \$31 trillion, and avert a federal default. The Treasury Department has said it is taking "extraordinary measures" to continue paying its bills, but money will run short this summer.

While vowing that "defaulting on our debt is not an option," McCarthy faces his own challenges pushing a legislative fix to passage.

With his slim majority and less-than-strong grip on power, he has been unable to rally his Republican troops around a budget-cutting proposal that he could offer the White House as a starting point in negotiations.

the Civil Rights Act of 1964, requires employers to accommodate employees' religious practices unless doing so would be an "undue hardship" for the business. But a Supreme Court case from 1977, *Trans World Airlines v. Hardison*, says employers can deny religious accommodations to employees when they impose

"more than a de minimis cost" on the business.

Three current justices—Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch—have said the court should reconsider the *Hardison* case.

The case currently before the court involves Gerald Groff, a former employee of the U.S. Postal Service

in Pennsylvania's Amish Country. For years, Groff was a fill-in mail carrier who worked on days when other mail carriers were off.

But when an Amazon.com contract with the Postal Service required carriers to start delivering packages on Sundays, Groff balked. Initially, to avoid the shifts, Groff

transferred to a more rural post office not yet doing Sunday deliveries, but eventually that post office was required to do them too.

Whenever Groff was scheduled on a Sunday, another carrier had to work or his spot went unfilled. Officials said Groff's absences created a tense environment and contributed to morale problems. It also meant other carriers had to deliver more Sunday mail than they otherwise would.

Groff resigned in 2019 rather than wait to be fired, he said, and then filed a religious discrimination lawsuit. Groff wants the Supreme Court to overrule the *Hardison* case and to say that employers must show "significant difficulty or expense" if they want to reject a religious accommodation.

Biden administration lawyers representing the Postal Service, however, say *Hardison* shouldn't be overruled but instead clarified to make clear it gives substantial protection for religious observance. The administration also says that—as in Groff's case—when an employee requests a religious accommodation that negatively impacts other workers, that can be an undue hardship on the business.

The case is *Groff v. DeJoy*, 22-174.

Trump's House GOP allies take fight to Manhattan DA's turf

NEW YORK (AP)—Republicans upset with Donald Trump's indictment are escalating their war on the prosecutor who charged him, trying to embarrass Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg on his home turf partly by falsely portraying New York City as a place overrun by crime.

The House Judiciary Committee, led by Ohio Republican Jim Jordan, held a field hearing Monday near Bragg's offices to examine the Democrat's "pro-crime, anti-victim" policies.

New York City has "lost its way when it comes to fighting crime and upholding the law," Jordan said. "Here in Manhattan, the scales of justice are weighed down by politics. For the district attorney justice isn't blind—it's about advancing opportunities to promote a political agenda—a radical political agenda."

Democrats said the hearing was a partisan stunt aimed at amplifying conservative anger at Bragg, Manhattan's first Black district attorney, and pressed Republicans to instead focus on curbing the

proliferation of guns. Mayor Eric Adams, a Democrat and former police captain, called the hearing an "in-kind donation" to the Trump campaign and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a New York Democrat, called it "a circus."

New York Rep. Jerrold Nadler, the committee's ranking Democrat, said: "Jim Jordan engages in a lot of political theater in Washington, but he should know better than to take his tired act to Broadway. New Yorkers see through this transparent attempt to defend Donald Trump at all costs while ignoring the real public safety needs of our community."

In a statement, Bragg's office said that "ending violence, stopping crime, and supporting victims and their families" are his most sacred duties and that he will "always work with any local, state or federal partner who is serious about achieving lasting public safety."

"For outside politicians to now appear in New York City on the taxpayer dime for a political stunt is a slap in the

face to the dedicated NYPD officers, prosecutors and other public servants who work tirelessly every day with facts and data to keep our home safe," Bragg's office said.

Interrupted several times by outbursts from protesters, Monday's hearing was the latest salvo in Jordan's weekslong effort to use his congressional powers to defend Trump from what he says is a politically motivated prosecution.

Jordan has sent letters to Bragg demanding testimony and documents, claiming Bragg's office is subject to congressional scrutiny because it gets federal grants. He subpoenaed a former prosecutor, Mark Pomerantz, who previously oversaw the Trump investigation. Bragg then sued Jordan, calling the subpoena a "transparent campaign to intimidate" him.

Pomerantz said in court papers Monday that the subpoena leaves him in an "impossible position" and, if enforced, will require him to violate his ethical obligations or risk being held

in contempt of Congress if he refuses. A federal judge scheduled an initial hearing for Wednesday.

Attacking New York City and its mostly Democratic leaders over crime is an old trick for politicians who represent rural and suburban districts, and the punch can still land with some audiences.

But in reality, the city's violent crime rate remains substantially below the U.S. average.

In 2022, Bragg's first year in office, there were 78 homicides in Manhattan, a borough of 1.6 million people. That was a drop of 15 percent from the year before. Palm Beach County, Florida, where Trump is one of about 1.5 million residents, had 96 killings.

"People hear New York and they think crime, and that's because they've been trained to think that way," said Dr. Jeffrey Butts, the director of the Research & Evaluation Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in Manhattan. "It's not real. It's just the stories that people tell."

Asia

US, allies stage drills as North Korea warns of security crisis



AP

In this photo provided by South Korea Defense Ministry, South Korean Navy's destroyer Yulgok Yi I, bottom, U.S. Navy's the guided missile destroyer USS Benfold and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force's destroyer Atago, top, sail during a joint missile defense drill among South Korea,

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The United States, South Korea and Japan conducted a joint missile defense exercise on Monday aimed at countering North Korea's growing nuclear arsenal, as a top North Korean army official warned the U.S. that it risks "a clearer security crisis and insurmountable threats."

Last week, North Korea conducted one of its most provocative weapons demonstrations in years by flight-testing for the first time an intercontinental ballistic missile powered by solid fuel. It is considered a more mobile, harder-to-detect weapon and could directly target the continental United States.

South Korea's navy said Monday's three-way drills took place in international waters off the country's eastern coast and focused on mastering proce-

dures for detecting, tracking and sharing information on incoming North Korean ballistic missiles. The one-day naval exercise involved an Aegis destroyer from each country.

"The drills' goal is to improve our response capabilities against ballistic missiles and strengthen our ability to conduct joint operations as North Korea's nuclear and missile threats continue to escalate," Jang Do-young, a spokesperson for South Korea's navy, said at a news briefing.

The United States and South Korea also launched separate bilateral drills on Monday involving some 110 warplanes, including advanced F-35 fighter jets, that will continue through April 28.

The two sets of exercises could trigger a belligerent response from North Korea, which views the United States'

military drills with its Asian allies as invasion rehearsals. North Korea has used such drills as a pretext to accelerate its own weapons development, creating a tit-for-tat cycle that has raised tensions in recent months.

Later Monday, Ri Pyong Chol, a North Korean army marshal and close associate of leader Kim Jong Un, warned that the United States should "stop at once its political and military provocations getting on the nerves of (North Korea)."

"If the U.S. persists in the acts of endangering the security environment on the Korean Peninsula in disregard of the repeated warnings by (North Korea), the latter will take necessary actions to expose the former to a clearer security crisis and insurmountable threats," Ri said in a statement carried by state media.

Explosive targeting Japan PM renews worries of homemade arms

Japanese police have confiscated metal tubes, tools and possible gunpowder from the home of a man suspected of throwing what was believed to be a homemade pipe bomb at Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at a campaign event, rekindling worries about the growing threat of easy-to-make weapons in Japan.

Witnesses say they saw an object that looked like a thin metal thermos flying overhead and landing near the prime minister. Kishida was safely evacuated before the device exploded, the crowd fleeing in panic as white smoke surrounded them.

Police have confirmed one injury to a police officer. Experts say a pipe bomb likely caused the explosion, and the impact and amount of smoke suggest it probably wasn't that powerful.

The 24-year-old suspect, Ryuji Kimura, was wrestled to the ground at the fishing port of Saikazaki in the western Japa-

nese city of Wakayama on Saturday, just before Kishida was to make a campaign speech for a local governing party candidate.

On Monday, police sent Kimura to local prosecutors to extend his detention for 10 days for further investigation. He currently faces an allegation of obstruction of duty, but experts say additional allegations such as assault and attempted murder are possible.

In a raid Saturday night at Kimura's home in Kawanishi city, more than 100 kilometers (60 miles) northeast of Saikazaki, police confiscated unidentified powder, metal tubes and various tools that were possibly used to make the device thrown at Kishida.

Police said they confiscated two possible metal pipe bombs at the site, one that exploded but largely retained its shape, and another that was in the suspect's hand at the time of the arrest along with a cigarette lighter. Police also found

a fruit knife in his bag.

The crudely constructed weapons and the outdoor election campaign setting were reminiscent of the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe nine months ago with a handmade double-barrel gun.

Violent crimes are rare in Japan. With its strict gun control laws, the country has only a handful of gun-related crimes annually, most of them gang related. But in recent years, there has been growing worry about homemade guns and explosives.

"The situation surrounding homemade explosives is becoming a considerably serious problem," said Nobuo Komiya, a Ritssho University professor of criminology. "Not just bombs. Anyone can even make real guns using 3D printers."

They cannot be regulated because their ingredients are legally available, he said.

World

Ukraine official: We will launch a counteroffensive when ready

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—A top Ukrainian official said Monday that Ukraine will launch its counteroffensive against Russian troops when it's ready, adding that it's only a matter of time before the country achieves the necessary level of military preparedness to do so.

Oleksiy Danilov, the secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, told The Associated Press in an interview in Kyiv that Ukraine's allies are helping the government to achieve the level of technical equipment necessary to launch the attack, delivering heavy armored vehicles and ammunition.

But he also expressed frustration that sometimes officials from allied countries "promise one thing and do a completely different one." He didn't elaborate.

"If we aren't ready, then nobody will start unprepared," he said.

Speaking about a major U.S. intelligence leak, Danilov echoed other Ukrainian leaders who say they

don't see it as gravely damaging future offensives, stressing that Ukraine doesn't share highly sensitive information with anyone.

"If someone thinks that we report to someone, then he is deeply mistaken," he said. Such sensitive security matters are decided in closed meetings with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and "only there will it be decided when, in what direction, at what pace we will liberate our territory," he added.

The documents include previously unreported sensitive disclosures about Ukraine, including just how close Ukraine's vital air defense systems are to running out of missiles, with stocks expected to be exhausted as soon as late this month or May. That would open Ukraine's skies to more of the Russian air and artillery strikes that already have devastated cities and infrastructure.

Danilov refused to comment on Ukraine's current stockpiles of weapons, saying only that "it will be

enough to curb Russia."

Still, he said that Ukraine was working round the clock to prepare for a possible offensive, "including Saturday and Sunday. There is no vacation in war."

"It's only a matter of time. This time comes with a very high price for us."

Danilov stopped short of confirming that the Patriot air defense system promised by the U.S. has arrived in Ukraine, but strongly hinted that they have. Asked to comment on statements by Ukrainian air force spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat last week in which he said that the Patriots was expected in Ukraine sometime after Easter, he said: "Well, Easter has passed already."

"The answer to your question is simple: everything is good," he added.

Russia's war in Ukraine has turned into a stalemate amid heavy fighting in the country's east, particularly around the town of Bakhmut which for eight and a half months has been the stage for the war's longest and bloodiest fight.

Sudan's generals battle for 3rd day; death toll soars to 185

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP)—As explosions and gunfire thundered outside, Sudanese in the capital Khartoum and other cities huddled in their homes for a third day Monday, while the army and a powerful rival force battled in the streets for control of the country.

At least 185 people have been killed and over 1,800 wounded since the fighting erupted, U.N. envoy Volker Perthes told reporters. The two sides are using tanks, artillery and other heavy weapons in densely populated areas. Fighter jets swooped overhead and anti-aircraft fire lit up the skies as darkness fell.

The toll could be much higher because there are many bodies in the streets around central Khartoum that no one can reach because of the clashes. There has been no official word on how many civilians or combatants have been killed. A doctors' group earlier put the number of civilian deaths at 97.

The sudden outbreak of violence over the weekend between the nation's two top generals, each backed by tens of thousands of heavily armed fighters,

trapped millions of people in their homes or wherever they could find shelter, with supplies running low and several hospitals forced to shut down.

Top diplomats on four continents scrambled to broker a truce, and the U.N. Security Council was set to discuss the crisis.

"Gunfire and shelling are everywhere," Awadeya Mahmoud Koko, head of a union for thousands of tea vendors and other food workers, said from her home in a southern district of Khartoum.

She said a shell stuck a neighbor's house Sunday, killing at least three people. "We couldn't take them to a hospital or bury them."

In central Khartoum, sustained gunfire erupted and white smoke rose near the main military headquarters, a major battlefield. Nearby, at least 88 students and staffers have been trapped in the engineering college library at Khartoum University since the start of fighting, one of the students said in a video posted online Monday. One student was killed during clashes outside and another wounded, he said. They do not have food or water, he

said, showing a room full of people sleeping on the floor.

Even in a country with a long history of military coups, the scenes of fighting in the capital and its adjoining city Omdurman across the Nile River were unprecedented. The turmoil comes just days before Sudanese were to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting.

The power struggle pits Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, the commander of the armed forces, against Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, the head of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The former allies jointly orchestrated an October 2021 military coup. The violence has raised the specter of civil war just as Sudanese were trying to revive the drive for a democratic, civilian government after decades of military rule.

Under international pressure, Burhan and Dagalo had recently agreed to a framework agreement with political parties and pro-democracy groups, but the signing was repeatedly delayed as tensions rose over the integration of the RSF into the armed forces and the future chain of command.

Good Housekeeping

When planting a meadow, heed conditions in your garden, yard



By JESSICA DAMIANO
Associated Press

Wildflower meadows have been growing in popularity among gardeners, and for good reason. They're low-maintenance and drought-tolerant, provide food for birds, wildlife, pollinators and other insects, and they're pretty.

Wildflowers are native plants, so your options will vary according to where you live. Start your search on the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's website (www.wildflower.org). Select your state, and narrow the search to other parameters like plant habit and sun exposure. Then browse the list for plants that strike your fancy.

A typical meadow comprises roughly 60% native grasses

and 40% flowering perennials, but there's no harm in straying from that ratio.

If you'd rather buy ready-made wildflower seed mixes formulated for your region, ensure that the species included are appropriate for the type of soil, sunlight and moisture conditions your garden provides.

Don't be fooled into believing you can just sprinkle the seeds and walk away. Soil prep is an essential first step for any garden, wild or not. Skip it, and your results will likely disappoint.

First, remove weeds and turfgrasses from the area. Digging them up would be the most labor-intensive way of doing this, and risks moving weed seeds to the surface,

making the problem worse. An easier, often more effective strategy is to smother or solarize the existing vegetation, which requires patience.

Layer cardboard over the lawn or weedy area, then cover it with 4-6 inches of mulch. The grass and most of the weeds beneath it will suffocate by fall. Alternatively, cover the area with plastic sheeting or a tarp, and secure it with a stone or brick placed on each corner. This method can be quicker because as the plastic heats up, it essentially cooks the plants beneath it.

In autumn (or next spring), turn the soil in the new bed and incorporate a modest amount of compost. If you have heavy clay soil, mix in sand to improve drainage. Don't add

fertilizer (or use too much compost) because wildflowers prefer low soil fertility.

Annual wildflower plants should be planted only in spring, to allow time for them to mature, produce and drop seeds, which will sprout the following year. Perennial plants, however, can be planted—and perennial and annual seeds sown—in fall.

Most wildflower seeds are tiny, so combining one part of your seed mix with 10 parts of dry sand can make spreading them easier. Scattering by hand may be fine for small beds, but using a seed spreader is preferable in larger areas.

To ensure the seeds make good contact with the soil, walk over them or pass over the area with a lawn roller, but



AMERICAN MEADOWS INC. VIA AP



AMERICAN MEADOWS INC. VIA AP

What do I need to know about tree removal?

By PAUL F. P. POGUE
Ask Angi

Removing a tree is a big job you should trust the pros to handle. DIY tree removal carries a lot of risks. Even small trees might weigh hundreds of pounds, so even a minor misjudgment in its fall can cause major injuries or property damage. And since the job involves power tools, ladders and potential entanglement with high wires such as power lines, you want experts to be doing this work.

Depending on the tree size, tree removal costs between \$200 and \$2,000 on average. Quite often, stump removal is a separate cost of around \$350, so be sure you know

what you're getting up front when you hire.

When you hire a tree service company, make sure you check all their credentials. This is a good idea for any service pro, but it's essential with tree removal. Since they deal with many dangerous situations, you want to be sure they carry liability insurance (which protects you in the event any property is damaged) and workers' compensation insurance (because if they don't, you might be held personally liable if one of their employees is injured on the job.) Similarly, verify they have whatever state or local licensing is required to do tree service business in your area.

Although it's not usually legally required, you should also ensure they carry accreditation from a respected industry association such as the Tree Care Industry Association or International Society of Arboriculture. Accreditation means the pro has committed to meeting specific industry standards and training to do the work correctly and safely. Such organizations also often require that the pro holds insurance.

Their safety training and expertise mean tree companies know how to cut away high branches to avoid trouble with power lines or entanglement with other trees, remove large limbs so they don't cause damage when the tree comes

down, bring down the tree in a controlled direction, and cut the tree into smaller pieces.

When hiring a tree service company, find out what they'll do with the tree itself when they're done. Often, they will present several options, such as woodchipping the remains into mulch, cutting it into firewood or hauling it all away.

Tree service can leave quite a mess, such as leaves, small branches, saw dust, wood chipings and other debris littering the area. Before the process begins, ask your pro what clean-up they offer so you both understand what you're getting. It's best to get the quote and process in writing so there's no misunderstanding later.

don't bury them.

If you're sowing in spring, keep the area lightly watered in the absence of rainfall, as the season's warming temperatures will threaten to dry them out.

Expect annual species to flower the first year, but you may have to wait a year or two for perennials to bloom. In the meantime, keep the bed free of tall weeds, which could shade out your fledgling wildflowers. At the end of the growing

season, leave your meadow standing to provide food and shelter for overwintering insects and wildlife. Mow it down in spring just before new growth begins.

Jessica Damiano writes regular gardening columns for The Associated Press. She publishes the award-winning Weekly Dirt Newsletter. Sign up here for weekly gardening tips and advice.

Life & Style

‘Mario’ tops charts again; ‘Beau is Afraid’ wins in limited

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

“The Super Mario Bros. Movie” scored the best second weekend ever for an animated movie in North American theaters with \$87 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday. The family-friendly Universal release dropped a slim 41% from its record-making opening weekend.

With \$94 million from international showings, “Mario’s” global total now stands at a staggering \$678 million, surpassing “Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania” to become biggest film of 2023 in just two weekends.

“There are not enough adjectives to describe the enormity of this box office performance,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore.

For most blockbusters, sec-

ond weekends are usually down by about 60%, making “Mario’s” 41% drop especially noteworthy. According to Comscore, only a handful of films that opened over \$100 million have had less of a fall, including “Shrek 2,” “Frozen 2,” 2002’s “Spider-Man,” “The Force Awakens” and 2016’s “The Jungle Book.”

“To the casual observer that may not seem like a big deal, but that is an important metric,” Dergarabedian said. “It’s the greatest indicator of audience love for the movie.”

“Mario” faced little major competition this weekend even with a slew of new national releases including “Renfield,” “The Pope’s Exorcist,” “Mafia Mamma” and the animated “Suzume.” It still has two weekends before “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3” flies into theaters to jumpstart the summer



moviegoing season.

Sony and Screen Gem’s R-rated “The Pope’s Exorcist” starring Russell Crowe as the late Father Gabriele Amorth—the chief exorcist of the Diocese of Rome from 1986 to his death at 91 in 2016—fared the best. It made an estimated \$9.2 million from 3,178 locations.

Third place went to “John Wick: Chapter 4” in its fourth

weekend with \$7.9 million. The Lionsgate action pic has now made over \$160.1 million domestically.

Universal’s “Renfield,” the supernatural thriller starring Nicolas Cage as Dracula and Nicholas Hoult as the title character, opened in fourth place with \$7.8 million.

Some wondered if opening “Renfield” and “The

Pope’s Exorcist” the same weekend—both R-rated and of similar genres—hurt the films. But Dergarabedian said that while audiences may have been similar, “these films play for more than just one weekend.”

Ben Affleck’s Air Jordan origin story “Air” rounded out the top five, with \$7.7 million in its second weekend to bring

its total domestic earnings to \$33.3 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

11. “The Super Mario Bros. Movie,” \$87 million.
2. “The Pope’s Exorcist,” \$9.2 million.
3. “John Wick: Chapter 4,” \$7.9 million.
4. “Renfield,” \$7.8 million.
5. “Air,” \$7.7 million.
6. “Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves,” \$7.4 million.
7. “Suzume,” \$5 million.
8. “Mafia Mamma,” \$2 million.
9. “Scream VI,” \$1.5 million.
10. “Nefarious,” \$1.3 million.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Malala Yousafzai working on new book, her ‘most personal’

NEW YORK (AP)—Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai is working on a new memoir, the latest book by the young activist from Pakistan known for her advocacy for education for girls and for surviving an assassination attempt by the Taliban when she was in her teens. Atria Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, announced the memoir Monday. It is currently untitled and has no scheduled release date. Yousafzai’s previous works include the million-selling “I Am Malala: The Story of the

Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban,” published in 2013, the year before she won the Nobel Peace Prize at age 17. She has since graduated from Oxford University and married Asser Malik, a manager with the Pakistan Cricket Board.

TV and film writers authorize strike over pay, other issues

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Unionized film and television writers have voted overwhelmingly to give their leaders the authority to call a strike if they’re unable to reach an agreement on a new con-

tract. In an email to members Monday, the negotiating committee of the Writers Guild of America said nearly 98% of the 9,218 votes were cast to authorize the strike, with nearly 79% of guild members voting. The guild is currently negotiating with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers on a deal aimed at addressing pay and other changes brought on by the dominance of streaming services. The writers’ three-year contract expires May 1.

Fox News-Dominion libel case set to begin after brief delay

WILMINGTON, Del.

(AP)—The Delaware judge overseeing a voting machine company’s \$1.6 billion defamation lawsuit against Fox News delayed the opening of the trial Monday, raising the prospect that the two sides might attempt to settle before the eagerly watched case goes before a jury. Superior Court Judge Eric Davis suggested the sides try to mediate their dispute, according to a person close to Fox who was not authorized to speak publicly about the status of the lawsuit. Attorneys for both sides who appeared in court Monday declined to answer reporters’ questions about why it was put off, as

did representatives for both companies. Davis gave no explanation for postponing the trial’s start until Tuesday, although he did note that delays are common and built into the schedule. Jury selection and opening statements were planned for the first day in a trial that, if it happens, is expected to last six weeks.

Judge seals Alec Baldwin settlement terms in fatal shooting

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—The judge hearing the wrongful death lawsuit against actor Alec Baldwin and an array of producers and crew

linked to a fatal film set shooting agreed Monday to seal from public view the terms of a proposed settlement agreement in the case that benefits the son of slain cinematographer Halyna Hutchins. The New Mexico judge said the right to privacy for Hutchins’ 10-year-old son overrides obligations for public disclosure and ordered that settlement documents and approval hearings be sealed in the civil lawsuit that argues that Baldwin and other film crewmembers ignored industry gun safety standards on the set of the Western film “Rust” ahead of the 2021 shooting.

Father cuts off all contact with son over his lifestyle

DEAR ABBY: Our son “Victor” and his wife have informed us that they are “polyamorous.” They have been married for nine years, and were together for five years before they married. They have agreed to this arrangement, and their partners know they are married. They love each other, own a home together and plan to be together forever. They are “safe,” and no one is getting hurt.

Because of their lifestyle, my husband, “Del,” has not communicated with them for more than 16 months. He says if I die first, he’ll make sure they get nothing in his will. I have visited them alone (we live over 800 miles away) and plan to do so in the future. Our other married son, “Mike,” tried to talk to his father about this, but Del still refuses to budge. When Mike said this means we will never be together as a family again, his father had no response.

I have told Del this is breaking my heart. I have considered leaving him over this. However, if I leave, I’m doing the same thing he has done—refusing to have a relationship because I don’t like his behavior. My husband also refuses to go to family gatherings with his cousins or his brother because he has fundamental political differences with them. In fact, there are now only four family members he’s interested in seeing. I thought he would soften his attitude over time, but he hasn’t. What should I do?

HEARTBROKEN IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR HEARTBROKEN: What you do is continue living your life as you always have, and see your children and other relatives as often as you wish. By now it should be obvious that nothing will change your husband’s attitude. If he insists on isolating and punishing himself, you can’t stop him.

If Del becomes vindictive or punitive to you, consult a legal adviser about whether you want to stay in a marriage like this. If you choose to leave, you will be able to decide INDEPENDENTLY how your assets should be distributed in the event of your death.

DEAR ABBY: My wedding ring from my first marriage was perfect. My ex asked my dad for my late mother’s ring to propose to me. He then took Mom’s ring to the jeweler and had the stone put in a modern, beautiful setting that I loved.

We are divorced now because my husband transitioned to female. We’re amicable, all things considered. I can’t imagine a lovelier ring if I want to remarry someday. If I do, can I use the same ring because of its sentimental value? I think I may want a fresh start and a different ring, but I can’t imagine anything better and I feel stuck.

THINKING ABOUT THE RING

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR THINKING: This is something you will need to discuss with the next person who expresses an interest in marrying you. Many men would not like the idea of you wearing the ring from your first marriage. A compromise might be to reuse the heirloom stone and have it placed in a setting you both agree is appropriate. (It would sure save someone a lot of money.)

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Kings beat Warriors 114-106 to take 2-0 series lead



SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—

De'Aaron Fox scored 24 points and made a backbreaking 3-pointer that led the playoff newcomer Sacramento Kings to a second straight victory over the defending champion Golden State Warriors, 114-106 on Monday night.

The Kings closed the game strong after Golden State's Draymond Green was ejected for a flagrant foul and became the first team to take a 2-0 series lead over the Warriors in the Stephen Curry era.

The Warriors will try to get back into the series when it shifts less than 90 miles southwest to San Francisco for Game 3 on Thursday night.

The game got heated in the fourth quarter when Green stomped on Domantas Sabonis' chest with 7:03 to play, leading to an ejection for a flagrant foul.

During the review, the fans in Sacramento yelled derogatory chants toward Green, who egged them on by waving his hands, holding a hand to his ear calling for louder cheers and standing on a chair.

The Warriors fought back to tie the game before the Kings went on a 17-8 run to run away with it to the delight of the towel-waving crowd.

Fox's 3-pointer made it 107-101 with 2:17 to play and the Kings were in control from there. Davion Mitchell put it away with another 3 that made it 112-103 with 1:18 left.

Sabonis added 24 points for Sacramento and Malik Monk scored 18 off the bench.

Curry led the Warriors with 28 points but made just 3 of 13 from 3-point range as Golden State struggled to get going offensively. The Warriors committed 22 turnovers.

The crowd in success-starved Sacramento didn't quite hit the fever pitch of the opener when the fans celebrated the franchise's first play-

AP
Sacramento Kings forward Domantas Sabonis (10) congratulates guard Davion Mitchell (15) in the first half during Game 1 in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs against the Golden State Warriors in Sacramento, Calif., Monday, April 17, 2023.



off game following a record drought of 16 seasons.

The fans started to get into it in the second quarter thanks to another spark off the bench from Monk, who scored 32 points in the opener. Monk hit three 3-pointers in the first 2:04 of the period to help fuel a 23-8 run that turned a six-point deficit into a nine-point lead.

Golden State fought back and tied it on a 3 by Curry before allowing the final six points of the quarter to trail 58-52 at the half.

The Kings built the lead to 14 points in the third quarter before the Warriors scored eight in a row. Sacramento led 83-75 headed to the fourth.

76ERS 96, NETS 84

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Joel Embiid pumped his fist in the air and exhorted the Philly crowd to get louder as Tobias Harris and Tyrese Maxey hit game-changing 3s and stymied Brooklyn runs with clutch boards.

"It's as happy as I've ever seen him since I've been here with other guys making shots,"

third-year coach Doc Rivers said. "He was really celebrating his teammates tonight."

With good reason. For a franchise player who was raised in the organization to Trust the Process, Embiid has finally come around to learning how to trust his teammates.

Maxey hit six 3-pointers and scored 33 points, Embiid and Harris had 20 apiece, and the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Brooklyn Nets 96-84 on Monday night to take a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference playoff series.

Embiid, the two-time NBA scoring champion, was quiet offensively, going 6 of 11 from the floor, but he did just about everything else. The MVP finalist had 19 rebounds, seven assists and three blocks.

"A lot of people think I just love scoring the basketball," Embiid said. "I don't think it's true. I enjoy winning."

Embiid's increased faith in his teammates is one reason the third-seeded Sixers expect a deep run in the playoffs.

"Better teammates help," Rivers said with a laugh. "Maturity and preparation. We

work on it every day."

Harris had 12 rebounds. James Harden scored only eight points on 3-of-13 shooting for the Sixers after a sensational Game 1 effort.

Game 3 is Thursday in New York.

Cam Johnson led the Nets with 28 points. Johnson sent Embiid stumbling on a one-handed dunk down the right side that posterized the 7-footer. Johnson stared down Embiid as the Nets forward backpedaled on defense in the first half.

"I don't remember getting dunked on," Embiid tried to say with a straight face.

The slam was Brooklyn's last GIF-worthy highlight.

Maybe the 76ers just needed to listen to their coach more as they chase their first NBA championship since 1983.

After Brooklyn scored the first bucket of the second half, Rivers called a quick timeout.

"C'mon, guys! C'mon!" Rivers implored in the huddle. "Listen, it's up to y'all what you all want to do."

How about finally decide the game.

"It was time for us to realize we need to be ready," Harris said of the timeout speech. "We need to pick our energy up. We need to pick our body language up. This is our arena. This is our home floor. This is our win that we need to get."

Maxey, who kept the Sixers alive with 15 points in the first half, was stuffed by the rim on a fast break but Harris followed for the bucket and the 76ers finally tied the game at 55-all. Maxey didn't miss on the next possession—a corner 3 that sent the crowd into a frenzy.

Then PJ Tucker missed a 3, grabbed his own rebound, dished to Harden and the Beard buried his first 3 of the game. Harris came right back and connected on a 3 that had him hopping and waving his arms off the court headed into a timeout.

Embiid then erupted in celebration with the Sixers ahead 64-56.

"We didn't play our best basketball but in the second half we just figured out what worked and we kept doing it over and over and

over," Embiid said.

Philly's scoring spurt was about it for the Nets, who shot 35% in the second half.

"The only adjustment made was that ball didn't go in the hole for us," Nets coach Jacques Vaughn said. "We got open looks, they tried to go zone, we had enough shooting out there. The ball just didn't go in."

The Sixers needed the spark after they spiraled from Game 1 dominance to Game 2 disaster in the first half.

No Sixer represented that fall more than Harden. His seven 3s steadied the Sixers in the opener but the aging vet—who battled left Achilles tendon soreness down the stretch of the regular season—was overwhelmed in Game 2. He missed 6 of 7 shots in the first half and all four 3-point attempts. Throw in two fouls and five turnovers and it was a marvel the Sixers only trailed 49-44 at the break.

"As bad as we played offensively we were only down five points," Maxey said. "We knew if we could get our offense to catch up to our defense, and continue to be stingy on defense, we knew we had a shot."

Holding only a slim lead had to distress the Nets. Johnson scored 22 points in the half but—much like in Game 1—he Nets got crushed on the boards and in the paint. Embiid scored eight points but grabbed 15 boards, 13 defensive.

Embiid, who wore a "Best Dad Ever" sweatshirt at the podium after his young son tagged along with him after Game 1, made up for some offensive frustration with a two-handed jam late in the game that brought the crowd to its feet.

"We held Embiid under his average," Nets forward Dorian Finney-Smith said. "They were just the best team tonight. They found a way to pull it out."

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Nobody blocked more shots per game, nor had better defensive numbers at the rim this season, than Memphis' Jaren Jackson Jr.

And voters noticed.

The Memphis big man was announced Monday night as the NBA's defensive player of the year, becoming the second player to win the award while wearing a Grizzlies' uniform. He joins Marc Gasol in that club, after the Spaniard did it a decade ago.

Jackson led the league with 3.0 blocks per game this season, after finishing fifth in the defensive player of the year voting last season. He got 56 first-place votes and 391 vot-

Jackson wins defensive player of year over Lopez, Mobley

ing points to finish ahead of runner-up Brook Lopez of the Milwaukee Bucks, who got 31 first-place votes and 309 points. Cleveland's Evan Mobley—in just his second NBA season—was third with eight first-place votes and 101 points.

"Team defense really helps us. It goes a long way," Jackson said on the TNT broadcast that announced the award.

The shooting percentage that Jackson allowed at the rim—46.9%—was the best in the league among those with at least 300 shots defended there, and was an obvious plus on Memphis' path to the No. 2 seed in the Western

Conference playoffs.

"Hands down, no-brainer, JJ's definitely defensive player of the year," Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said earlier this month.

Jenkins could get into all the analytics that he wants, but the simple eye test also tells the story. Jackson wasn't ready for the start of the season because his surgically repaired right foot needed more recovery time.

And Memphis was, well, not great on defense while waiting for Jackson to get ready.

"He missed the first (15) games of the year. We were really bad defensively," Jenkins said. "He comes back

into the lineup and things turn the corner drastically."

Jackson gave Jenkins and the Grizzlies' staff much credit for his role in helping him win the award.

"They've instilled the confidence in me to be aggressive offensively—but really unleash me defensively to go out there and do whatever," Jackson said.

Lopez, the runner-up, had never been this close to a major individual award in his 15 NBA seasons.

Even though he's always been a shot-blocker—he's swatted 1.8 per game throughout his career—this was the first time

that Lopez was a serious candidate for the DPOY award. He finished 10th in the balloting in 2020, a season in which his Milwaukee teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo took home both that award and MVP.

Lopez blocked a career-best and league-high 193 shots this season, plus contested 17.5 shots per game—by far the most of anyone in the league.

Golden State's Draymond Green was fourth, followed by Miami's Bam Adebayo in fifth, Antetokounmpo in sixth, Toronto's O.G. Anunoby and Milwaukee's Jrue Holiday tied for seventh, Philadelphia's Joel Embiid and Brooklyn's Nic

Claxton tied for ninth, Chicago's Alex Caruso in 11th and Miami's Jimmy Butler in 12th.

The award was the first major individual one to be announced by the league this season.

Three more awards are scheduled to be revealed later this week—Clutch Player (Butler, Chicago's DeMar DeRozan or Sacramento's De'Aaron Fox) is coming Tuesday, Coach of the Year (Sacramento's Mike Brown, Oklahoma City's Mark Daigneault or Boston's Joe Mazzulla) will be announced Wednesday and Sixth Man of the Year (Boston's Malcolm Brogdon, Milwaukee's Bobby Portis Jr. or New York's Immanuel Quickley) will be revealed Thursday.

Rangers blank Royals 4-0 after deGrom exits with sore wrist



KANSAS CITY, Mo.

(AP)—Jacob deGrom exited with a sore right wrist after pitching four spotless innings, and two Texas Rangers relievers completed a one-hitter Monday night in a 4-0 victory over the Kansas City Royals.

The Rangers said deGrom was removed as a precaution. The two-time NL Cy Young Award winner struck out five and walked one, throwing 39 of his 58 pitches for strikes.

"I felt it a little bit warming up," deGrom said. "I thought it was going to loosen up and it actually tightened up a little bit as the game went on."

"We're playing it smart. Could I have kept going? Probably. But it was lingering and it got a little bit worse as the game went on. I just want to play it safe. We've got a long season ahead of us."

Texas manager Bruce Bochy said there's concern any time you have to take a player out of a game because of injury, but he's optimistic.

"We'll re-evaluate him tomorrow," Bochy said. "Any time you take somebody out, that's a fair question. I think I can answer it better tomorrow. Right now, I feel pretty good about it."

Josh Jung launched a three-run homer in the first inning and Marcus Semien added a solo shot in the third. Dane Dunning (1-0) struck out five and walked none in 4 1/3 innings of relief.

"He's been doing a terrific job for us," Bochy said. "With the confidence in Dane coming in, we felt good. We brought in a guy who's been throwing the ball well. He was set to go, so that was an easy call."

Matt Duffy's one-out single in the fifth off Dunning was Kansas City's only hit. José Leclerc got two outs to end it.

Beset by injuries the past two seasons with the New York Mets, deGrom signed a \$185 million, five-year contract with Texas as a free agent in December.

"I'm honestly not too concerned," he said. "I would like to think I'll make my next (start), but we'll see how it is tomorrow."

The right-hander is 1-0 with a 3.48 ERA in four starts for the Rangers.

Kansas City (4-13) dropped to 1-10 at home this season. Jordan Lyles (0-3) gave up four runs—one earned—and three hits in eight innings. He walked three and struck out three.

The Rangers jumped out to



AP
Texas Rangers starting pitcher Jacob deGrom throws to a Kansas City Royals batter during the first inning of a baseball game, Monday, April 17, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo.

a 3-0 lead in the first. Royals third baseman Hunter Dozier committed a throwing error on Semien's leadoff grounder and then a fielding error on Travis Jankowski's bunt. One out later, Jung sent a drive over the left-field bullpen.

"(Lyles) was incredible, and that's why I felt so bad when I didn't make those two plays," Dozier said. "He looked really good for us, and I wish we could've played better behind him and got some runs for him."

Semien led off the third with a 412-foot shot to left.

The only baserunners deGrom permitted came on an error by first baseman Nathaniel Lowe in the third and a walk to Vinnie Pasquantino in the fourth.

Royals pitcher Kris Bubic had additional tests on the flexor strain that landed him on the 15-day injured list after Saturday's start. Kansas City manager Matt Quatraro said the first test confirmed the strain but also revealed some "underlying concerns" that required a second opinion.

BREWERS 7, MARINERS 3

SEATTLE (AP)—Milwaukee ace Corbin Burnes pitched 5 1/3 innings before leaving with a left pectoral strain, and the Brewers earned their fourth win in five games.

After recording the first out of the sixth on Julio Rodríguez long fly ball to center, Burnes (2-1) turned toward the Milwaukee dugout and summoned an athletic

trainer and manager Craig Counsell. The 2021 NL Cy Young Award winner was removed from the game.

Burnes appeared to be pointing at his chest as he spoke with Milwaukee's staff.

Rodríguez and Cal Raleigh homered for Seattle. Chris Flexen (0-3) was charged with four runs in six innings.

Brice Turang connected for Milwaukee, and Brian Anderson had three hits.

METS 8, DODGERS 6

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Daniel Vogelbach homered, and the Mets rallied for their fifth straight win.

Pete Alonso, Brandon Nimmo and Jeff McNeil each had three hits for New York. Vogelbach drove in three runs, and Brett Baty hit an RBI single in his season debut.

Mets left-hander David Peterson (1-2) permitted six runs and seven hits in six innings. Adam Ottavino earned his second save with a perfect ninth inning.

Freddie Freeman homered twice for the Dodgers, and Max Muncy also went deep. Alex Vesia (0-2) got the loss.

ASTROS 9, BLUE JAYS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Jake Meyers hit a three-run homer in Houston's seven-run first inning.

Meyers and Corey Julks each finished with two hits and three RBIs. Houston's Cristian Javier (2-0) pitched five innings of one-run ball.

José Abreu sparked Houston's fast start with a two-

run double against Kevin Gausman (1-2). After Kyle Tucker walked and Jeremy Peña reached on catcher interference by Danny Jansen, Julks made it 4-0 with another two-run double.

Meyers then hit a drive to right for his first homer of the season, capping the seven-run first.

Gausman (1-2) was charged with eight runs, seven earned, and seven hits in 4 2/3 innings.

Matt Chapman and Santiago Espinal homered for Toronto.

REDS 8, RAYS 1

CINCINNATI (AP)—TJ Friedl drove in four runs, and Cincinnati beat Tampa Bay after Reds right-hander Hunter Greene departed with a leg injury.

Kevin Newman homered for Cincinnati, and Nick Senzel scored two runs. The Reds won the opener of the three-game interleague series after losing 14-3 to Philadelphia on Sunday.

Tampa Bay lost for the third time in four games since its 13-0 start. Josh Lowe homered for the Rays, and Randy Arozarena and Harold Ramírez each had two hits.

Greene surrendered a lead-off double in the third before he was struck by Yandy Díaz's comebacker. The 23-year-old right-hander departed after the inning.

Greene was diagnosed with a right tibia contusion. X-rays were negative.

Ian Gibaut (1-0) got the win. Jalen Beeks (0-1) was charged with the loss.

ANGELS 5, RED SOX 4

BOSTON (AP)—Hunter Renfroe hit a three-run homer, and the Angels avoided a four-game series sweep.

Angels star Shohei Ohtani pitched two hitless innings before departing because of a long rain delay. He allowed one run on Rob Refsnyder's groundout in the first.

Tucker Davidson (1-1) worked 3 1/3 innings for the victory in Boston's annual Patriots' Day game. Carlos Estévez worked a shaky ninth for his second save.

Rafael Devers had two hits and drove in a run for the Red Sox. Brayan Bello (0-1) was tagged for five runs and eight hits in 2 2/3 innings.

CUBS 10, ATHLETICS 1

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Patrick Wisdom hit two more homers and drove in four runs, leading Hayden Wesneski and the Cubs to the road win.

Wisdom, who played at nearby Saint Mary's College, connected for a solo drive in the second inning and a three-run shot in the eighth. He has five homers during a four-game streak and eight homers on the season, tied for the big league lead.

Cody Bellinger had a career-high five hits as the Cubs won for the eighth time in 11 games. Wesneski (1-0) pitched seven innings of one-run ball.

Oakland left-hander Kyle Muller (0-1) was tagged for six runs and 13 hits in four innings.

The Athletics lost their fifth game in a row. They dropped to 3-14, matching

the 1951 and '56 teams for the worst 17-game start in franchise history.

PIRATES 14, ROCKIES 3

DENVER (AP)—Andrew McCutchen homered for Pittsburgh, and Mark Mathias had a career-high four hits.

McCutchen, who had two hits, launched a solo homer in the first inning—his third of the season—and the first seven Pittsburgh batters reached in a six-run second.

Colorado starter Kyle Freeland (2-1) was charged with nine runs, seven earned, and eight hits in 2 2/3 innings. The left-hander posted a 0.96 ERA through his first three starts.

Rich Hill (1-2) cruised through six innings to pick up his first win with the Pirates.

Kris Bryant had three hits, including his first homer at Coors Field since joining the Rockies before the 2022 season.

DIAMONDBACKS 6, CARDINALS 3

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Pavin Smith hit his first career grand slam, sending Arizona to the win.

Ketel Marte also homered for the Diamondbacks. Merrill Kelly (1-2) pitched six innings of one-run ball, and Andrew Chafin got three outs for his third save.

St. Louis right-hander Jack Flaherty (1-2) allowed four runs and four hits in six-plus innings.

Alec Burleson hit a two-run homer for the Cardinals in the eighth. St. Louis dropped to 0-6 in series openers this season.

MARLINS 4, GIANTS 3

MIAMI (AP)—Jorge Soler hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning, leading Miami to its fifth win in six games.

Jazz Chisholm Jr. and Jesus Sánchez each had two hits for the Marlins. Matt Barnes (1-0) got three outs for the win, and A.J. Puk worked the ninth for his second save.

During Soler's at-bat, third base umpire Lance Barrett signaled Giants starter Logan Webb had balked, allowing Jean Segura to score from third. But the umpiring crew met and ruled no balk occurred.

Segura returned to third and Soler sent Webb's next pitch over the wall in center for his second career pinch-hit homer.

Webb (0-4) allowed eight hits in 6 2/3 innings in his first start since agreeing to a \$90 million, five-year contract on Friday.

Tinian, GCA, MHS, SSHS tops HS athletics qualifiers

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Tinian High School topped four events, while Grace Christian

Academy, Marianas High School, and Saipan Southern High School excelled in three events each in the high school 18U NMA/PSS All Schools Athletics 2022-2023 last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

The Stallions were the fastest in the one heat of the boys 100m and 400m and took first place in the boys javelin and girls javelin events; the Dolphins claimed first place in one heat of the girls 100m, boys 400m, and boys 1,500m; the Manta Rays was first place in one heat each of the boys and girls 100m and the girls long jump event; and the Eagles dominated a heat in the boys 100m and 400m, and was first in the boys long jump event.

Matthew Sarmiento from THS was first in the 18U boys 100m with a time of 12.21; Mokyang Kim from Marianas High School came in second with 12.42; and Justice Aldan from THS was third at 12.74 seconds.

Sarmiento also claimed



MARK RABAGO

Casey Cruz from Saipan Southern High School is seen in a sprint event during the NMA/PSS All Schools Athletics high school 18U qualifier last Wednesday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

the top spot in the 18U boys 400m at 1:02.34; Jacky Liu from Agape Christian School had second place at 1:02.71; and third place was Jasper Hall from Grace Christian Academy at 1:03.17.

In the 18U boys javelin event, Marcial Patio from THS threw the furthest distance of 34.00m; teammate Bonny Gonzales threw 30.42m for second place; and Jovic Tuquero from Saipan Southern High School threw 28.86m for third place.

In the 18U girls javelin event, Karisse Ong from THS was first with her throw of 22.57m; second was Kina Rangamar from MHS with 20.03m; and third was Elim Huang from ACS at 19.77m.

Theodore Rodgers from GCA claimed two top spots in the 18U boys 100m with 11.63 seconds, while in the 400m, he sprinted into the finish line at 57.83 seconds. Second in the 100m race was MHS' Cody Shimizu at 12.30 and third was Hombre Hocog from SSHS at 12.56. Mokyang Kim claimed sec-

LADY

From Page 20

the Lady Sufa in the sixth inning on a sacrifice fly off Kayla Reyes' bat. They could not make a comeback in the seventh and lost 6-1.

Results of the men's division will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

ond in the 400m with 1:00.63 and third was THS' Saim Ali with 1:01.8

Jasper Hall from GCA came in first in the 18U boys long jump at 5.80; Mokyang Kim was second at 5.73; and Nolan Nate from SSHS was third with 5.35.

In the 18U girls 100m, Destiny Pangelinan from MHS was first with 14.21; second was Ha'ani Passi from SSHS with 14.68; and Priscilla Cheng from ACS

was third with 15.18 seconds.

The 18U boys 400m was dominated by Cody Shimizu's time of 58.70; second was Caleb Cui from ACS with 1:00.16; and third was teammate Abraham Zhu with 1:05.15.

Anthony Bergancia from MHS tore up the 18U boys 1,500m with a time of 5:14.08; second was Aaron Wang from ACS at 5:14.56; and third was Yu Ling Chai from SSHS at 5:16.73.

SIS

From Page 20

David Ye who downed all of their points.

In contrast, the Geckos had a good passing game and allowed a point for each of their players. Nasson Wessel had 10 markers, Theo Joab had 9 of his own, Aiden Camacho had 8, while Daniel Joab had 4 and Audiscott Iakopo made 2.

David Park, Ma'ase De Oro, Jose Sablan, Richard Zhao, Patrick McDonald, and Elijah Pangelinan helped out Ye throughout the game but couldn't get past the tight screens and speedy plays of the Geckos.

This gave the Geckos their fourth win, while the Guardians are at one win and two losses.

In the Tottots versus Torchbearers game, the former had a 5-point lead, 18-13, heading into the second half. In the first half, Matua Fejeran had a big triple to begin the game, followed by field goals by Dane Tibayan, Rodney Tomei, and Dyson Danis.

Meanwhile, 3 points were made by Reyviel Escarlan, followed by 4 markers for Daniel Yang. Two points came off a shot by Raffy Cai and was fouled right after for two free throws.

In the second half with just two minutes left, the Torchbearers were trailing 17-24, but back-to-back points by Cai and Daniel Song closed the gap to 20-24. However, a big 2-point shot by Hornejas put them up by 6 points.

Then, with less than 15 seconds remaining, Song shot a 3-pointer for a 23-26 game,

The Top 4 in the 18U boys 100m were Jovic Tuquero with 12.30; Saim Ali with 12.60; William Lee from SIS at 13.19; and Ty Sandbergen from THS at 13.79 seconds.

The Top 4 for the 18U girls 100m were Casey Cruz from SSHS at 13.45; Jannah Casarino with 15.20; Karisse Ong at 16.06; and Thonica Aquiningoc from THS at 17.12 seconds.

Top 3 for the 18U girls long jump were Casey Cruz 3.90; Ha'ani Passi at second with 3.71; and Kina Rangamar at third with 3.52.

but time quickly expired and the Tottots came out with the W barely unscathed.

The Tottots have four wins, while the Torchbearers were handed their first loss, 3-1.

In other results that day, Tanapag Middle school defeated Grace Christian Academy, 24-17, and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School defeated ChaCha OceanView Middle School, 36-25.

SIS 33 – Wessel 10, Joab 9, Camacho 8, Joab 4, Iakopo 2.

SCS 12 – Ye 12.

Scoring by halves: 9-7; 24-5.

DMS 26 – Hornejas 6, Peters 4, Fejeran 3, #183, Tibayan, Tomei, and Danis 2.

ACS 23 – Song and Cai 8, Yang 4, Escarlan 3.

Scoring by halves: 18-13; 26-23.

FORMER

From Page 20

basketball games and practices at Mount Carmel School in the late 1970s and early 1980s. I grew very attached to Abner and his family over the course of my life growing up. To hear of his passing truly breaks my heart, and it is hard for me to find the words to say about him right now."

Personally, White shared that Venus played many roles in his life.

"He was a brother who made time for me and always took me under his wing; a mentor who helped bring me up throughout my playing and coaching years, the administrative work we did for basketball in the Northern Marianas, and even my officiating career; and that favorite uncle who comforted you when things weren't going your way, and so much more... Basketball brought us together over the decades, and we both loved it, but not as much as he loved his wife and family. He always made me feel like I was his family too, and I love him forever for that."

He added that basketball in the CNMI would not have developed and grown to its glory days had it not been for



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Marc Venus, Abner Venus, and Gabriel White when the latter last visited Saipan in 2017.

Venus and a handful of others who sacrificed their time and efforts for the sport.

"From grassroots to the senior national teams, to the administrative work he put in since the days of the Saipan Amateur Basketball Association—the first national governing body for basketball in the CNMI—to its evolution into the BANMI, there is so much basketball history in the Northern Marianas that many do not know about, all thanks to the work of Abner Venus."

He also suggested that Venus be enshrined posthumously in the Northern Marianas Sports Association Hall

of Fame, along with his contemporaries—Michael White, Antonio Rogolofoi, Elias Rangamar, the 1994 CNMI Men's National Basketball Team (Micronesian Games silver medalists), 2006 CNMI Women's National Basketball Team (Micronesian Games Gold Medalists), and many others who truly represent the legends of basketball in the Northern Mariana Islands.

"On behalf of my familia to the Venus familia, we lift heartfelt prayers for Abner, and we send our love and deepest condolences. May the Lord bless you always. Rest in love and peace," said White.

Former NMSA president Michael White, who is Gabriel's father, is also sorry after hearing of Venus' passing.

"He did a lot for the sport of basketball in the CNMI. I hope that his memory will be a blessing to his family."

Jorge De Guzman, a former player of Venus, said he owes what he achieved in the sport to his former mentor.

The many time MVP of local leagues said aside from developing him as a player, Venus also helped him to be employed at Microl Toyota in 1995.

"I have a lot of good memories with Abner, especially in basketball. He was such a kind person in and outside of the basketball court. It's really sad that he's not with us anymore."

One of the referees under him, Rex Yabut, seconded De Guzman when he said Venus was a very kind human being and he's only one of hundreds he helped. Yabut said Venus helped him not only in his development as a basketball referee but also his personal growth.

"In times that I was in the lowest of the lows, he and his family were always there to help. It's really sad that he has passed but at least he can rest now."

Ruel Nava, a basketball table official, said Venus was the person who pushed him to be involved in basketball and be part of BANMI.

"What I remember most is we're always together almost every night at different basketball courts because of the many leagues. It's usually only on Mondays that I could stay home because there was no game that day."

Like Nava, Ferdie Tobias said Venus was the one who pushed him to become a referee.

Former United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte said he always admired Venus' drive in organizing basketball leagues.

"That's where he was in his best element. You see that he's happy when you see his eyes almost disappear when he smiles. He's also such a good friend and will never let you down."

Basketball legends Elmer Pineda, Danny Bicera, and Ed Cosino all played under Venus and almost echoed each other on how good a coach, manager, and friend he was.

"He was my manager in basketball and he's such a good person and anytime you need anything he's always there to help and support

you," said Pineda, who is also now a referee.

Bicera said Venus personally visited him at the Nauru Building where he worked to recruit him to play for Toyota Wheels.

"That's the first time I met everybody in the team. He didn't only form a team but a family. There was always beer and food everytime we won a game and a big party after every championship with lechon. He always has this way of helping people out. He's a big loss for the sport of basketball in the Marianas," he said, adding that it's unfortunate he cannot fly to Saipan to give his last respects to Venus and his family.

Cosino, for his part, said before Venus became his close friend, they were rivals in basketball.

"He always recruited good players to try and beat our team, but we always managed to win the championships in the end. Then he recruited me to be part of Toyota Wheels and that's when his team finally started to win championships. He's one of the reasons basketball became popular on Saipan. Abner was a good coach and manager but even a better friend," he said.



Kings beat Warriors
114-106 to take 2-0
series lead

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Tinian, GCA, MHS,
SSHS tops HS
athletics qualifiers

PAGE 18



20 WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Former BANMI official Abner Venus passes away

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Abner Venus, one of the most influential basketball figures in the CNMI, passed away last Monday. He was 58 years old.

The former official of the Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, where he served as president and board member many times, is survived by his loving wife, Cristy and children Ruby, Jul, Marc, and James.

BANMI is the precursor of the Northern Mariana Is-



Venus

lands Basketball Federation.

Elias Rangamar, CNMI Hall of Famer and part of the old BANMI board with Venus, said the Iloilo in the Philippines native was a contemporary of his.

"Ab I believe is the same age as me. He went to Mt. Carmel School while I went to Marianas High School. He liked to boast that they were the first private school to ever beat a public school. I told him they were lucky I was not playing hoops back then," he joked.

The CNMI developmental

coach for both athletics and basketball added that under Venus, CNMI basketball unmistakably had its heyday.

"I think basketball was at its prime in terms of leagues and youth development during his tenure as president of BANMI. He was also instrumental in getting the longest running youth program—Rotary Youth Basketball League—in the islands along with Mr. Frank Diaz. It ran for over 25 years," he said.

Rangamar added that he and Venus shared the same passion for basketball and they even

had plans to write a book about CNMI basketball history from the Peace Corp years to the present along with the Filipino basketball pioneers during the 1970s.

"My heart goes out to his wife, kids, and family. I will miss him dearly," he said.

Gabriel White, former head of the basketball referees association and a former CNMI national basketball player, said Venus was a mentor, a colleague, and overall a fellow basketball junkie like him.

"I knew Abner Venus ever since I was a boy, when I would follow my father to

See FORMER on Page 19

Lady Legals, Lady Blue Jays best opponents

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It was a slugfest during the Lady Legals and Hotshots game that ended, 17-16, while it was a battle between the Lady Blue Jays and Lady Sufa pitchers, 6-1, in the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

In what seemed to be a lopsided game with the Hotshots producing more than the Lady Legals by the fourth inning with 13 runs, the Lady Legals' bats sparked a fire in the fifth with seven runs.



From the top of the lineup, Tiah Camacho led off with a single, then Almina Deleon Guerrero reached base on balls. Another single was hit by Pauline Camacho followed by an RBI single by Jennifer Palacios.

Multiple errors by the Hotshots allowed more Lady Legals to get on base and score the seven runs for a tied 13-13 game.

The Lady Legals brought in four more insurance runs in the sixth inning from a lead off home then a double by Tiah Camacho and Catalina Dela Cruz.

The Hotshots were only able to produce two runs in the sixth from three singles by Brittany Luzama, Janica Lizama, and Daisy Kaipat.

The game was a close 17-15 with a chance by the Hotshots to make a comeback in the bottom of the seventh inning—but only one more

run was made and the game ended at 17-16.

In the afternoon game with the Lady Blue Jays versus the Lady Sufa, it was a pitcher's duel as it was a low scoring game compared to the one in the morning.

The Lady Blue Jays' veteran pitcher was out and a new pitcher, Angel Deleon Guerrero, took the mound. She went on to shut out the Lady Sufa from the first to the fifth inning.

Lady Sufa pitcher Evita Maratita held off the Lady Blue Jays' offense until the third inning when they scored four runs. Bong Babauta led off with a triple, then Rayna Deleon Guerrero made an RBI single, followed by another single by Keolani Rios and Destiny Pangelinan.

It was quiet for the Lady Blue Jays in the fourth and fifth inning when no hits were made and only two batters reached base on balls.

Then, Rachel Salalila hit a two RBI inside-the-park home run after a double by Kianu Aldan for a 6-0 game. Only one run was made by

See LADY on Page 19



LEIGH GASES

Bridget Deleon Guerrero of Lady Sufa readyies her swing against the Lady Blue Jays in their game in the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

SIS, DMS undefeated in MS boys caging

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Saipan International School earned a lopsided win against Saipan Community School, 33-12, while DanDan Middle School just managed to slip past Agape Christian School, 26-23 in the IT&E Interscholastic

LEIGH GASES

Saipan International School varsity player Nason Wesel makes a jump shot in their game against Saipan Community School in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2022-2023 last Monday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Boys Middle School Basketball League 2022-2023 last Monday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

With their wins, the Geckos and Tottots have an unblemished record of four wins each.

The sticky fingers of the Guardians in the end as almost shot after shot were made in the second half for 24 points to the Guardians' 5.

The Guardians had a hard time finding an opening as the ball was passed mostly to

See SIS on Page 19